



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

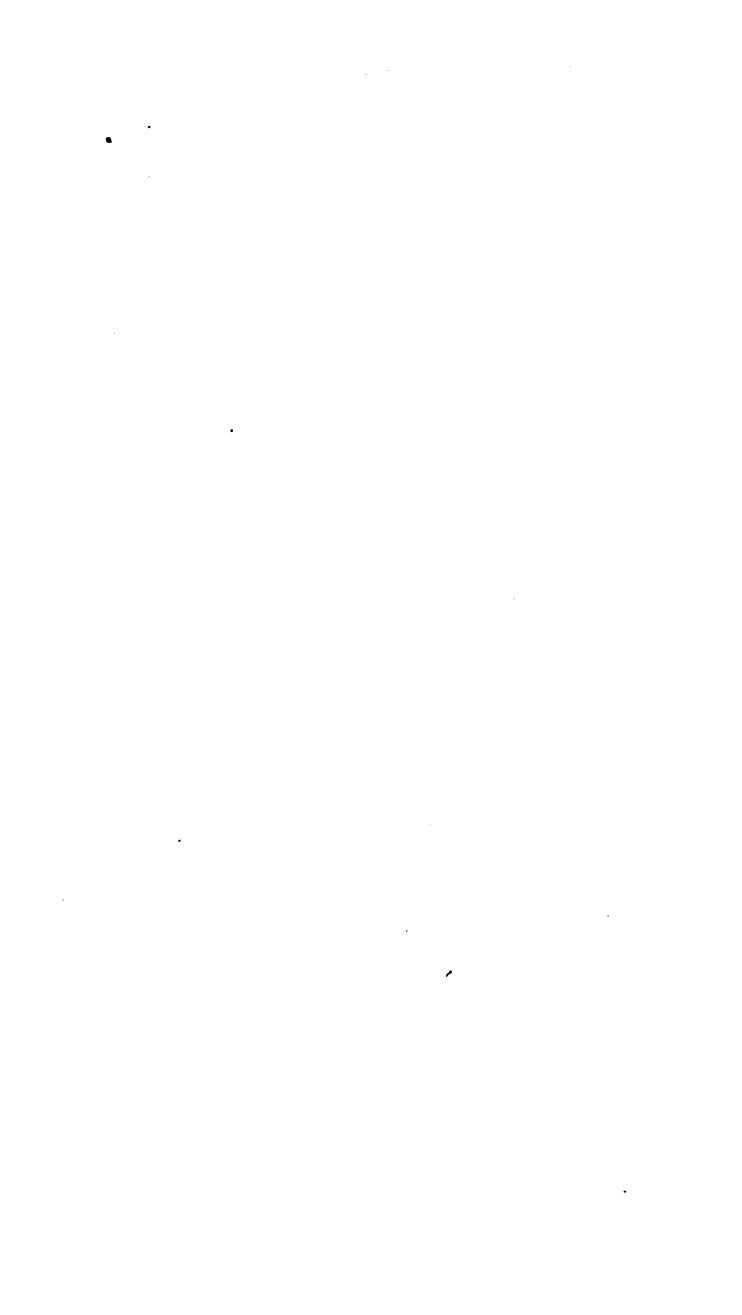
Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>





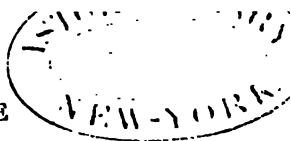








THE



LADIES LIBRARY.

VOLUME THE FIRST.

WRITTEN BY A LADY.

PUBLISHED BY

SIR RICHARD STEELE.

THE SEVENTH EDITION.

L O N D O N :

Printed for W. STRAHAN, J. and F. RIVINGTON,
W. JOHNSTON, C. SAY, T. LONGMAN, T. CASLON,
T. CADELL, T. DAVIES, W. NICOLL, G. RO-
BINSON, T. BECKET and Co. W. WOODFALL,
R. BALDWIN, and J. D. CORNISH.

MDCCLXXII.

XXOY V/3M

21.12.81

YH.080



To the Right Honourable the :

C O U N T E S S

O F

BURLINGTON.

MADAM,

 I Humbly desire Your Ladyship would forgive the Presumption I am now guilty of in presenting You with this Book. I do it from

VOL. I.

A 3

the

DEDICATION.

the high Honour and Veneration I have for Your great Merit and Virtue. It cannot, I know, furnish your Ladyship with new Reflections; and the Ladies, of whom You are the happy mother, have an Example before them, more prevalent to form them to every thing Praise-worthy, than any Precepts they can find in the works of the best Writers. But as there is much curiosity in these Papers, and great Strength and Force in the Reasonings of them, give me leave to offer this Collection for the Use of Female Life, as a Testimony of the respect, which I, with all who are honoured with the least acquaintance with You, must pay to your Ladyship for the eminent Example You have given the World

DEDICATION.

World in the important Characters of a Wife and a Mother.

To Command with the Mien of making a Request, to Oblige with the Aspect of receiving Favours, and to win Affection without other Design than making all People happy who converse with Her, or depend upon Her, are Excellencies peculiar to my Lady BURLINGTON. But as there is a complaisance, which, like sincere Friendship, speaks our good Opinion in our ordinary Looks and Actions, more than any Language can do it, I here shall go no farther than just to declare myself, with great Deference, among the Admirers of Your great Goodness and Virtue, and beg of Your Ladyship

DEDICATION.

to forgive my saying thus much,
for the Forbearance of saying more,
on a Subject of which I am so very
fond, as that of expressing myself,

M A D A M,

Your Ladyship's most Devoted,

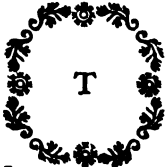
most Obedient, and most

Humble Servant,

RICHARD STEELE.



P R E F A C E.

 T H E Reader is to understand that the Papers, which compose the following Volumes, came into my Hands upon frequent mention in the *Spectator* of a Lady's Library. They are supposed to be collected out of the several Writings of our greatest Divines, and are disposed under proper Heads, in order to fix in the mind general Rules for Conduct in all the Circumstances of the Life of Woman.

In Matters, where both Sexes are equally concerned, the Words Man and Men are made use of, but the Matter does not for that Reason the less relate to Women, or argue that the Work is not principally intended for the Information of the Fair Sex.

They were referred to me as what were at first intended by the Compiler for a Guide to her own Conduct, and if thought worth publishing, to be of the same Service to others of her Sex, who have not the same Opportunities of searching into various Authors, and laying before themselves, by that means, all the different Relations in which they are, or may be engaged.

P R E F A C E.

I put them into the Care of a Reverend Gentleman much better qualified for the Publication of such a Work, and whose Life and Character are not so subject to the Exceptions which Levity of some of my Writings, as well as the Circumstances may expose a Work as passing through my Hands only. Tho' he was so kind as to peruse the Papers, he would not allow that the Exception I made against my being Publisher was of Weight; for he would not give it, that its coming out with my Name, would give an Expectation that I had assembled Thoughts of many ingenious Men on pious Subjects, as I had heretofore on Matters of a different Nature: By this means, he believed the Work may come into the Hands of Persons who take up no Book that has not Promised Entertainment in the first Page of it. For the rest, he was of Opinion it would make its way, and I easily submitted to suffer a little Rallery, when I had Hopes of being the means of promoting the Interests of Religion and Virtue.

I wish there was a Word to describe the Men who can get little farther than bare Dispositions towards Goodness, and are so unhappy as to be incapable of becoming themselves good Examples of what they profess to admire. What I mean is, that I want to find a Word which should as modestly express a virtuous Man, as the Word Philosopher does a wise one. This would introduce the Endeavours of Men with this

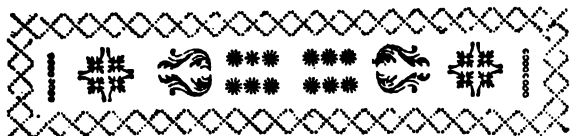


C O N T E N T S.

V O L. I.

<i>Introduction,</i>	Page 1
<i>Employment,</i>	5
<i>Wit and Delicacy,</i>	35
<i>Recreations,</i>	37
<i>Dress,</i>	42
<i>Chastity,</i>	98
<i>Modesty,</i>	113
<i>Meekness,</i>	152
<i>Charity,</i>	170
<i>Envy,</i>	222
<i>Detraction,</i>	226
<i>Censure and Reproof,</i>	265
<i>Ignorance,</i>	276
<i>Pride,</i>	331

T H E



T H E LADIES Library.

I N T R O D U C T I O N.



BEING by nature more inclined to such enquiries as by general custom my sex is debarred from, I could not resist a strong propensity to reading; and having flattered myself that what I read dwelt with improvement upon my mind, I could not but conclude that a due regard being had to different circumstances of life, it is a great injustice to shut books of knowledge from the eyes of women.

Musing one day in this tract of thought, I turned over some books of French and English, written by the most polite writers of the age, and began to consider what account they gave of our composition, different from that of the other sex. But indeed, when I dipped into those writings, were it possible to conceive otherwise, I could not have believed, from their general and undistinguished aspersions, that many of these men had any such relations as mothers, wives, or sisters. One of them makes a lover say in a tragedy,

VOL. I.

B

“ Thou

" Thou art woman, a true copy of the first,
 " In whom the race of all mankind was curst :
 " Your sex by beauty was to heav'n ally'd,
 " But your great lord, the Devil, taught you pride
 " He too, an angel, 'till he durst rebel,
 " And you are, sure, the stars that with him fell
 " Weep on ! a stock of tears, like vows, you have
 " And always ready when you would deceive."

OTWAY'S DON CARLOS

Another says,

" ——— Thy all is but a shew,
 " Rather than solid virtue ; all but a rib,
 " Crooked by nature.----Oh ! why did God,
 " Creator wise, that peopled highest heaven
 " With spirits masculine, create at last
 " This novelty on earth, this fair defect
 " Of nature, and not fill the world at once
 " With men, as angels without feminine,
 " Or find some other way to generate
 " Mankind ?"----

MILTON

And a third,

" Ah traitress ! ah ingrate ! ah ! faithless mind !
 " Ah sex, invented first to damn mankind !
 " Nature took care to dress you up for sin ;
 " Adorn'd without, unfinish'd left within :
 " Hence by no judgment you your love direct ;
 " Talk much, ne'er think, and still the wrong affect
 " So much self-love in your composure's mix'd,
 " That love to others still remains unfix'd ;
 " Greatness, and noise, and shew, are your delight
 " Yet wise men love you in their own despite :
 " And, finding in their native wit no ease,
 " Are forc'd to put your folly on to please."

DRYDEN'S AURENGZEBE

I shal

I N T R O D U C T I O N. 3

I shall conclude poetical testimonies to our disadvantage, with one quotation more.

“ ——— Intolerable vanity! your sex
 “ Was never in the right: You’re always false,
 “ Or silly; ev’n your dresses are not more
 “ Fantastick than your appetites: You think
 “ Of nothing twice: opinion you have none:
 “ To-day you’re nice, to-morrow nought so free;
 “ Now smile, then frown, now sorrowful, then glad,
 “ Now pleas’d, now not, and all you know not why.
 “ Virtue you affect; inconsistency you practise:
 “ And when your loose desires once get dominion,
 “ No hungry churl feeds ~~coarser~~ at a feast:
 “ Every rank Fool goes down.”

OTWAY’S ORPHAN.

It may be said for these writings, that there is something perhaps in the character of those that speak, which would circumstantiate the thing, so as not to make it a reproach upon women, as such. But to this it may be easily and justly answered, that if the author had right sentiments of women in general, he might more emphatically aggravate an ill character, by comparison of an ill to an innocent and virtuous one, than by general calumnies without exception.

But I leave authors, who are so mean as to desire to please by falling in with corrupt imaginations, rather than affect a just tho’ less extensive esteem by labouring to rectify our affections by reason; of which number are the greater part of those who have succeeded either in verse or prose on the stage.

When I apply myself to my French reading, I find women are still worse in proportion to the greater warmth of the climate; and according to the descriptions of us in the wits of that nation, tho’ they write in cool thought, and in prose, by way of plain opinion, we are made up of affectation, coquetry, falsehood, disguise, treachery, wantonness, and perfidiousness.

4 . INTRODUCTION.

business. All our merit is to be less guilty one than another under one of these heads.

Dissertations for the conduct of life are as gravely composed upon these topics, as if they were as fallible as mathematical truths. It cost me a great deal of pains to study by what means I should refute such scandalous intimations against my very nature. The more I reflected upon those abuses, I grew the more concerned to answer them, and finally resolved upon this.

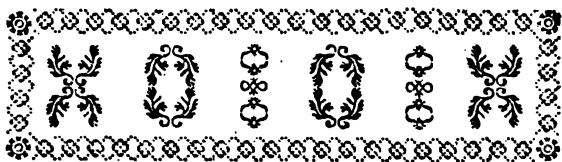
They are perhaps in the right who speak this of men and women; and it is the business of ingenious debauch men, who regard us only as such, to give us those ideas of ourselves, that we may become their more easy prey.

I believe it, therefore, the safest and surest method of gain saying such light accounts of our sex to think them a truth, 'till I had arrived, by the perusal of more solid authors, to a constancy of mind and settled opinion of persons and things, which should place me above being pleased or dissatisfied with praise or dispraise, upon account of beauty or deformity, or any other advantages or disadvantages, but what flowed from the habits and dispositions of my soul.

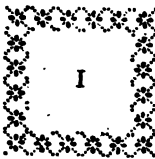
I resolve, therefore, to confine my little studies which are to lead to the conduct of my life, to the writings of the most eminent of our divines; and from thence, as I have heard young students do in the study of a science, make for my own private use a commonplace, that may direct me in all the relations of life that do now, or possibly may, concern me as a man.



EMPLOY



EMPLOYMENT.


IDLNESS is not only the road to all sin, but is a damnable sin itself, quite opposite to the great ends of the Creator, both in our creation and redemption. Can we imagine that God who made nothing but for some excellent end, should make man for no end at all, or for a very silly one? The soul is a lively active principle, and for what was reason given us, but to enable us to do good? This is the truest and most natural pleasure of a rational soul, which would always be in action, and should always have virtue for its object. Does it consist with infinite wisdom to endow us with so noble qualities, that we might trifle them away in vanity and impertinence? And if we consider the vice of idleness, with respect to our redemption; did not our Redeemer, give himself for us, to purify to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works? how can an unactive useless life answer the expectation of our Saviour? Where will that zeal appear in idleness? how dull and impure will be its flame? What is more busy than the mind of a wicked man? How is it in the pursuits of pleasure? How patient under difficulties? How insensible of pain? And shall we not be as active, as lively, in the pursuits of virtue? A barren life is a miserable return to the sacrifice of the fruitful blood of Christ. It disappoints all the purposes of his word, which every where condemns the sin of idleness:

6 . EMPLOYMENT.

ness: it was one of those, and not the least, that drew down the wrath of heaven on Sodom in a shower of fire. To what does the barren fig-tree allude, but to the destruction and damnation of the lazy and idle? why perished the unprofitable servant, but because he had not improved his talent? Many are the declarations in scripture against the sluggish and disorderly. The Son of God was an example of active virtue as well as innocence, and did not only refrain from doing evil, "but he went about doing good." We are not only forbidden the filthiness of the flesh and spirit, we are commanded the perfecting holiness in the fear of God; when we are prohibited to do evil, we are at the same time enjoined to learn to do well. Can the imagination of man form a stronger image of a life of action, than by comparing it to a race? And how can he hope to finish his course with glory, that lags and presses not forward to obtain the prize? There is not one Christian virtue to which the vice of idleness is not entirely contrary; faith, hope, charity, fear, vigilance, and mortification, are inconsistent with it; and the consequence is, that it must be a damning sin. All those virtues animate and invigorate the mind; whereas idleness enfeebles and fetters it. Pure, strict, and severe are those principles, idleness is soft and indulgent; they raise and exalt the soul, this debases and depresses it. And tho' it has great pretences to innocence and merit, its beginning is in sin, and its end in infamy and perdition. Stupidity, ignorance, levity and sensuality, are its companions, and harmless and simple as it appears, 'tis of all vices the most pernicious and dangerous.

There is hardly a sin that can be charged with so many tragical effects as idleness. It is the mother of disgrace and poverty; yet it deceives itself with a vain conceit of innocence, and is so foolish as to hope that it may be happy without labouring, or even desiring to be so. But granting it were as inoffensive as it would seem to be, that it is negatively good; let us consider
the

the sad state of this negative goodness. It robs religion and the world of the service due to both; it bereaves us of the pleasures of life and the comforts of death. Can idleness maintain the order and beauty of human society? Does it possess any of the virtues that vindicate the honour of religion and demonstrate its divinity? Is it productive of those bright examples that strike faith into infidels, and inflame those that believe with a generous emulation? Pleasure of life, if true, must be pure and spiritual, and can it be drawn from such a stagnated pool, as that of idleness? Virtue is a clear and flowing stream, 'tis the standing water that contracts filth, and the mind of the lazy man, like the bottom of a lake, is all mire and impurity. He is the same with respect to both moral and Christian virtue. What hope of happiness, what thirst of glory is he fired by? How flames his devotion, how shines his charity, what a stranger is he to all great and good actions, and how can his life therefore be pleasant, or his death be comfortable? As to the comforts of death, what a horrible desert must eternity be to a mind that has been ever wandering in a vast solitude? If life has not been enlightened by good works, how dark and gloomy will death look, when conscience summons the dying wretch to account, and he has nothing but a blank to produce? How will he discharge the debt he owes to his Maker, when the fruits of many idle years will be demanded, and nothing is to be found but fancy and fortune, humour and indulgence? How will the soul shrink, faint, and tremble? What horror and confusion will seize on all its faculties, when it considers that at the dreadful tribunal before which he is going to appear, every man will be judged according to his works? What then will become of him, who has none? If immortal glory be the reward of well-doing, what will be the fate of the sluggard, who has loitered and slept away that precious time, which the God of it, his judge, had given him to improve?

The guilt of this vice might be aggravated by enumerating the talents it wastes, the obligations it flights, and the hopes it forfeits. 'Tis indeed a general one; but that, instead of rendering it familiar to us, should alarm us the more, for fear of yielding to the strength of the temptation: We are apt to flatter ourselves that there is some secret charm in it; but it consists only in that we will not be at the pains to break it. It is an old cheat that has imposed on mankind from the beginning of the world, and will continue to do so to the end of it. Listlessness will ever be mistaken for simplicity, and indifference for innocence. As long as the path to heaven is a strait one, and there is the least pain in virtue, the idle will ever mistake the shadow for the substance, and be contented with it to their destruction.

Men of fortune may flatter themselves that they are not concerned in the lessons which are given against this vice. Their subsistence, does not depend on their industry. They are masters of their time, and it always sticks upon their hands; but should they not consider, that the more they have of it, the more ought they to devote to religion? "To whom much is given, of him much is required." Such a one has no excuse for neglecting the worship of God, either in publick or private: or if he has an excuse, it must be pleasure or laziness, which alike increases his guilt. The blessings he enjoys require a frequent and grateful acknowledgment to the bountiful Giver of them. What more noble part of life is there, what more transporting act of devotion, than the praise of the Omnipotent, to whom we owe our present happiness, and all our hopes of future? The great whose good or ill example is of such vast importance to the service or disservice of religion, cannot better improve that leisure which an easy and affluent fortune gives them, than in divine meditation, in prayer, in reading, and instruction, having opportunities to perform all those duties

duties with more zeal and solemnity, than those, the necessity of whose affairs keeps them in a continual hurry.

And the better to dispose them for this, they ought to be careful in the choice of their friends. Time may as well be gained as lost by conversation. The discourses and reflections of our acquaintance may awaken us when we are drowsy, and relieve us when we forget ourselves in the discharge of our duty. Nothing can be of greater use to us in a virtuous life, than the society of good men, whose discourse is seasoned with religion and virtue. On the contrary, how mischievous is that company whose conversation turns all on levity and wantonness. Gay, perhaps, in appearance, but when examined 'tis found only froth and impertinence. Civility and good manners, do not oblige us to be fools, and 'tis the highest folly to be fond of society where we cannot maintain our innocence, and where the joy and mirth, which charm us, corrupt our minds, and fill them with either lightness or impurity.

'Tis a great misfortune that persons of condition are no better instructed by their tutors in useful knowledge, that they might know how to amuse and divert themselves innocently, and find employment for those hours, which otherwise lay heavy on their hands. But sure the greatest need not complain for want of employment. How many are the virtues, how many the duties to which a Christian is obliged? How many excellent qualities are necessary to render a gentleman worthy the station where God has placed him? let him but make use of those qualities, and attend those duties; let him consider what is requisite to make a good master, a good husband, a good father, a good son, a good neighbour, a good subject, and a good friend; let him lay out all his leisure in endeavouring to answer all those relations as he ought, and then see, if there's any part of his time in which he cannot use-

fully and pleasantly employ himself. He who has arrived to the highest degree of perfection in the discharge of all the duties of life, will at last be found wanting in many. Some he will have omitted, and performed others with less care and diligence than he ought. Who therefore can complain of want of business? He that has a just Idea of his duty, will rather think his life too short, and his work too great. For let us be as diligent as we can, let us be as frugal of our time as we will, we arrive much sooner at a maturity of years, than of knowledge and virtue.

People of rank and wealth should, in all their diversions, consider what becomes the character of a gentleman, and the dignity of a Christian. He errs in both, whenever he is mean or vicious in any of his actions. Strange are the notions of honour by which some men are misled; they make no scruple of corrupting another man's wife or daughter, or defrauding the honest tradesman and artificer; but they must by no means bear with the fallacies of another man's passion, nor have any command of their own; they every minute affront their Creator, in profaning his holy name, and disobeying his laws: but they cannot live if they are themselves affronted, and murder is so far from being a sin with them, that it never gives their consciences the least disquiet. Were they as jealous of God's honour as they pretend to be of their own; they would soon see the folly and madness of their wild pursuits of revenge, and learn to forgive, as they expect to be forgiven.

If we carry our reflexions on the good employment of time to the lower order of men, such as are engaged in any trade or profession, we shall find room enough to condemn those for mispending it, who have so little to spare. The crime is highly aggravated in those whose idleness ruins them, as well in this world as the next. Their sin is the greater, as their temptation is the less: that time that is given up entirely to worldly

worldly gain, cannot truly be said to be well spent by a Christian whose greatest gain is godliness; but he that is negligent in his temporal affairs, will certainly neglect his spiritual. There's the less to be said on this subject; for that avarice in a great measure hinders the infection of idleness from spreading among men of meaner condition, who too often suffer the cares of this Life to thrust out those of another, and they are then truly idle and slothful servants to God, how industrious and faithful soever they are to the world. Time is but wasted and mispent, if it makes not provision for eternity; and it matters little whether it be used in pleasure, or in drudgery.

The ladies are apt to think that the softness of their sex excuses their idleness, and a woman who can do nothing, imagines therefore that she has nothing to do.

Is it not shameful to see how women of wit and politeness neglect the common rudiments of education? 'Tis enough for them to understand what they read, if they do not know how to pronounce it, and read with a grace. The more trivial these faults appear, the greater shame for such as cannot correct them; and how can they without blushing be in company guilty of errors, which they ought not to have brought out of their nursery? They should not read with a tone, nor hesitate in reading; they should go on smoothly, and with a plain, natural, and uniform pronunciation. Their deficiencies in spelling are become so fashionable, that to spell well, is, among the fair sex, reckoned a sort of pedantry; they are taught a little more care in writing a good hand, but that care goes no farther than the making their letters; the connexing them, and an orderly placing their words in straight lines, is what they are, for the most part, utterly strangers to.

They will find no manner of inconvenience in acquainting themselves a little with the grammar of their native language; not to learn it tediously by rule, as boys do Latin, but so as that they may be able to express

prefs themselves properly, and to explain their thoughts with clearness and brevity. 'Tis well known, that in old Rome, Sempronia, the mother of the Gracchi, contributed very much to the forming of the eloquence of her sons, who became afterwards so great men.

If the ladies understood arithmetick better, perhaps the keeping family accounts would not be such a piece of ill breeding. The convenience and advantage of having the mistress of the house, the steward, should, methinks, make their learning the four first great rules of arithmetick, be thought more necessary than it is at present. Let none think themselves above such Business. An illustrious lady, now a dowager, did not only help her lord in examining bills, and stating accounts, but even in writing his letters and drawing his covenants, tho' his fortune was so large, that it might well have excused the keeping more stewards than one. Such an employment as this may at first seem too troublesome; but if the ladies were by their education prepared for it, and used to it from their childhood, the trouble of it would be little, the most intricate accounts being made familiar to them, would lose the terror which their seeming difficulty raises in the ignorant; and the pleasure of reducing things from confusion to order by the power of numbers would be the greater for the advantage which would accrue to them by their exactness.

The very name of the law is frightful to the most part of the weaker sex, who are used to depend entirely on the protection of the stronger. It would be well however, if they knew something of the common rules of right, the difference between a will and deed of gift, what a contract is, what a partition of coheirs, what a legacy, a bond, or the like, and by what laws they are in force; what property is, what a personal, and what a real estate; for tho' they may not trust to their own judgment in matters of such weight, yet it will direct them in the use of that of others, either in a single or

a married life. Those of them, who out of a vexatious humour are for flying to the law upon all occasions, or rather upon no occasion at all, are not by this encouraged to indulge themselves in so expensive a folly, which a great comick poet has so happily exposed in the character of the widow Blackacre. But because that litigious widow knew too much law, it does not follow that the rest of the sex should know none at all. What knowledge is there, that may not be, that is not abused? And when the ladies are advised to acquaint themselves with so much of the law as help them to demand or defend their right, it is not meant that they should think it is to be got no where but in a court of justice; that they should fly all terms of peace and arbitrement, and put themselves immediately into the hands of attorneys and solicitors. They should only so far inform themselves in these matters, that they may know what is their due, and not lose it for want of claiming; which may very well happen by the profound ignorance that women are bred in of things of this nature.

'Tis very necessary that women of quality, and of estates, should know exactly what those estates are; what part in land, what in houses, what in money, where and in whose hands: they should be as well acquainted with the rentals of their lands, the draughts of them, the situation, leases, and condition of their houses, as their husbands; what debts they owe, as well as what are owing to them. By this they regulate their domestick and other expenses, provide for the future settlement of their children, and answer the ends of marriage, to be helps to their husbands in the discharge of paternal duties. How far it is convenient for them to understand well the business of the kitchen, to be the physicians and surgeons of the village, I shall not meddle with, reckoning such accomplishments as casual only, and not of absolute necessity to the forming a compleat gentle-

studies, which will very much contribute to the delight of them. If a lady knew a little Latin, she would find no manner of inconvenience in it, not so much to improve herself in that language as to help her in her own. The main thing is to put good books into her hands, wherein she may find so much benefit as compensates for the loss of that time, which otherwise will be wasted in the study of her own tongue as well as others. It is not so strange as some may imagine it, that improvement in English should be recommended. Our native language will not come to us by inspiration, and we shall write and speak with rudeness or affectation, if we know no more of it than we are bred with. 'Twas a saying of a great father of our church, eminent above any in the learned world, to a gentleman who had made him a compliment on his general knowledge of tongues, "that indeed he knew enough of other languages, and would spend the rest of his time in learning English," which he wrote with as much force and eloquence as any one. Let not the ladies then despise the study of a tongue which nature has given them, and with it a talent of speaking and writing it, with more grace than even the men themselves. La Bruyere observes, that their conversation is one of the best methods to make men polite, and that, methinks, should incline them to give it as many advantages as they can; of which, to speak politely is not the least. Tho' this is often acquired by those ladies that know no tongue but their native, yet those surely will have it in greater perfection, who know the beauties of other languages, and how to make use of them in their natural one. The gallant writers have distinguished themselves as much as any by their politeness. The poison in them is concealed as much as possible, and it is insensibly that they would lead the heart to love: let them therefore be avoided with care; for there are elegant writers enough on moral and divine subjects, and the danger of reading soft and

and wanton writings, which warm and corrupt the imagination, is so great, that one cannot be too careful in the choice of our author. Too much of this will be found among the works of poetry and eloquence, with which none but ladies of good taste and solid judgment should be trusted.

The like cautions are necessary with respect to musick and painting; the fancy is often too quick in them, and the soul too much affected by the senses. Musick especially so softens, that it enervates it, and exposes it to be conquer'd by the first temptation which invades it. The ancients were so well convinced of its perniciousness, that they would never suffer it in a well-regulated State. Why are languishing airs pleasant, but because the soul gives itself to the charms of the senses? What is it you mean by transporting or moving in musick, but the fury or the softness of desire? If the wise magistrate of Sparta broke all the musical instruments, whose harmony was too delicious and melting; and Plato rejected all the softer airs of the Asiatick musick, what should we Christians do with the Italian, as moving as any that ever were known to antiquity? How can chaste minds delight in the languishments of wanton poetry, made yet more languishing by the graces of musick? What great or noble is there in the dying notes of foreign strumpets and eunuchs? The power of musick never appeared more in England than it has done of late; we have seen it draw after it numerous audiences of both sexes at a very extravagant expence, who knowing nothing of the language were bewitched only with the magick of the sounds. Was it either vanity or pleasure? or if either, was it not alike criminal? Should Christians squander away so many precious hours in vanity, or take pleasure in gratifying a sense that has so often been a traitor to virtue?

Not that all poetry and musick is of the same dangerous nature. Retrench from them whatever tends
not

not to the true end, and they may be very usefully employed to excite in the soul lively and sublime notions of God and religion. As for poetry, many parts of the holy scriptures are poems, and were sung by the Hebrews. The first precepts of morality were delivered in verse, and the singing the praise of God was the most ancient worship among men. Our church has carefully provided for the refreshment of the souls of her children; the musick of our choirs gives us a ravishing, tho' a faint idea, of the happy choirs in heaven. For this reason ought not these arts, consecrated by the spirit of God, to be condemned. If a Christian turn was given to musick and poetry, it would be the greatest of all helps to disrelish profane pleasures. Those ladies that are sensible of the impressions made by these two arts, should early be directed to put them to divine uses. And such as have genius's and voices may innocently and usefully indulge themselves in them, if they find their souls raised by it in devotion, and their passions are free from those irregular emotions which are the effects of all pleasures that owe their birth to the senses. If young gentlewomen are forbidden poetry and musick, it will only increase their curiosity, and make them fancy there is more in them than they will find upon the experiment. If they have no taste nor genius, which are blessings that every one is not endowed with, without genius and taste they will soon be weary of them: wherefore the best way is to humour their inclinations, and take care that what talents they have, may rather serve to improve than to injure their virtue. The less is to be said of painting, for that few have a genius for it, and those that have none, would reckon it ridiculous to have advice given them about a thing they despise. All these arts, poetry, musick and painting, are proper entertainments only for women of quality; not for such as the duties of their families, and what they owe to heaven, would wholly employ.

The

The common education of young gentlewomen at boarding-schools is render'd useleſs, and indeed pernicious. Whole years are ſpent in teaching a taſtleſs girl to paint on glaſs, and ſuch ſort of uſeleſs knowledge, which ſhould be employed in forming their minds to virtue, and the moral duties of life. To draw, or to know ſomething of deſign, will be uſeful in ſeveral works that paſs thro' the hands of thoſe ladies, who do not take idleneſs to be the greateſt privilege of their ſex and quality. For want of knowing the rules of drawing, do we meet with ſo many extravagant figures in laces, linen, ſtuſſs, and embroideryes. Every thing is ill deſigned and confuſed, without art, without proportion. Theſe paſs for fine, becauſe they coſt a great deal of labour; their luſtre dazzles thoſe that ſee them afar off, or do not underſtand them. However the ladies have their rules which they will not depart from, as irregular as they are: cuſtom has ſo habituated them to them, that they reckon nothing more fantaſtical than to diſpute them. The principles of painting, if known to them, would make them look with contempt on things they otherwiſe ſet the higheſt value upon. This knowledge would leſſen the labour and expence of their works, and give them that variety and beauty, that regularity and grace, which can only ſet a price upon them.

In whatever innocent employments they ſpend their Time, certain it is, that 'tis their duty to employ it about ſomething, and that idleneſs is a vice as well in women as in men. The primitive Chriſtians of the higheſt quality wrought with their own hands. The very apoſtles themſelves, and the Saviour of the world, did the ſame: they did not work to paſs away their time only, they made of labour a ſerious, a continued, and a profitable employment. Auguſtus wore no clothes but what were wrought and made by his wife Livia, and his daughters; and a greater than Livia, becauſe a Chriſtian, and more virtuous, our late

late sovereign Queen Mary, of blessed memory, was always employing her leisure hours in some handiwork of use and convenience. She had an abhorrence for the idle, and suffered none of her ladies to be so in her presence. She knew and practised the duty of industry, knowing that labour is a great guard to innocence. For the mind will be busy, and if the hands do not take off the head and heart from wandering, they will sometimes forget their duty; and having not good matter to act upon, will be busied in that which is ill. When it wants necessary and useful, it strives by all means to amuse itself with needless and useless things. This, as it is the most dangerous, so it is the most ordinary cheat of the enemy; he takes from us the occasions of employing our time, by presenting us ways of losing it.

Idleness has two constant companions, irresolution and inconstancy. The ladies who are infected with this vice, no sooner have a design, but they presently change it: they lay, indeed, a great many foundations, but they never finish the building; they do not say I will, but I am inclined to will so or so; not this I desire, but this I could desire: they deliberate, but they never resolve; their motion is not progressive, but circular; they advance no more than the person who walks in a labyrinth. And how should there be any progress in the labours of those that have no aim, and propose nothing but to spend time: They care not what becomes of it, so they can but get rid of it. Some perhaps work a little to pass it away, as they call it, and to divert themselves; they overturn thus the order of nature, by which they are to rest a little, that they may work much; they, on the contrary, are for taking much rest, that they may work a little. Religion speaks after a quite another manner than these ladies seem to understand: it does not, 'tis true, forbid us to use recreation, but it requires that it should not be excessive. Whether God treats

as as mercenaries, or as children, still he enjoins us to work, seeing he himself works always. We have to animate us both his precept and his example. It is herein that we imitate him as a father, when we serve him as a master. None are dispensed with from this law, either upon the advantages of nature or of fortune. To work is a hard word with fine ladies; their delicate fingers make it grate to their ears; and they can't imagine any obligation lies upon them to do any thing, who have so many to do every thing for them. Their pleasure they take to be their business, and look upon themselves as not bound by those sacred laws which bind the rest of mankind; with such, good counsel will be reckoned ill manners, and one cannot hope that human advice will have any influence where divine command has none.

How far might our reflections run, on the good employment of time in both sexes, and on the helps we may have in it.

He that is choice of his time will also be choice of his company and his actions, that there be nothing vain in the one, nor criminal in the other. God has given us a short time upon earth, and yet upon this short time depends eternity. There's not an hour of our lives (when we are of years to distinguish good from evil) but we must account for to God who gave it to us. If every idle word will be put to our reckoning, what will every idle day? Many enemies have we to conquer, many evils to prevent, much danger to run through, many difficulties to overcome, many necessities to serve, and much good to do; where then is the leisure that is so burdensome to persons of all conditions? Nor were we born for ourselves only; our children, our relations, our friends, our neighbours, our prince, our country, demand their several duties of us, after we have discharged what are owing to ourselves. There is no station of life but a man may serve God in. All business

ness that is necessary, charitable or profitable, in order to any of those ends, which we are bound to answer, is the doing God's work, who has given the good things of the world to serve the needs of nature, by the toil of the ploughman, the skill of the artificer, and the traffick of the merchant: these men are the ministers of divine providence, and the stewards of the creation: thus a king, a judge, a priest, a lawyer, a physician, doing the work of their offices, according to their proper rules, are doing the work of God, in serving those necessities which God has made, and made no provision for them but by their ministry. No man can complain that his profession takes him off from religion; his profession itself is God's service, and if it be moderately pursued, and according to the rules of Christian prudence, it will leave void spaces enough for publick and private devotions.

Who is it that can pretend to be idle for want of having something to do? Who is there that can say he has no leisure for prayer and meditation? He that has the most business, may so order it, that he shall serve God in his very business, and find vacant hours for divine worship.

What surer remedy is there against wantonness, softness and effeminacy, than labour and industry? To the laborious there is scarce any passage open for the enemy, temptation is forced to steal upon them; but it comes upon the idle barefaced, and with the impudence of a restless importunity.

Idleness is the burial of a living man: an idle person being so useless to any purposes of God and man, that like one that is dead he is unconcerned in the changes and necessities of the world, and lives only to waste his time and eat the fruits of the earth; like a vermin or a wolf, when their time comes they die and perish, and in the mean while do no good; they neither plough, nor carry burdens; all they do is either unprofitable or mischievous.

There

There is no greater prodigal than the lazy man; he throws away that which is invaluable, in respect of its present use, and irreparable when it is past. No power of art or nature can recover it; wherefore it must be the greatest folly imaginable not to improve it to our utmost; to help us in which we may observe, and practise the following rules.

Let us accustom ourselves when we awake in the morning to think first upon God; let our last thoughts at night be the same, and what we may do for his service. Let us sleep away no more of our precious time than is necessary for our health. The glory of the morning sun is sufficient to invite the sluggard from his down, did not his duty summon him to leave it.

Whatever our professions are, we should be diligent in them, and give none of those hours to idleness or diversion, which prudence and good husbandry dedicate to them.

When we have answered what we owe to the common cares of life in our several employments, we owe the intervals of our time to our Creator. Not that we may not divert ourselves innocently, to refresh the soul, and make it the livelier in its other operations. The delight good men take in praying, reading, and meditation, is enough of itself to recommend it; and the exercise of works of charity, friendliness, and neighbourhood, is so pleasant to a human mind, that like virtue, 'tis its own reward. Shall we forget to call upon God to relieve our necessities, and to praise him for his continued goodness? Can we rise, can we lie down, without raptures of grateful devotion?

'Tis matter of great lamentation to see how our solemn fasts and festivals are loitered away, instead of being spent in prayer and praises. Better for the husbandman to follow his plough, and the artificer his trade, than to do nothing, or to do wickedly. Such days should be devoted to works of religion and charity: instead of which, our fasts and festivals, changing
only

only the form; and our festivals, days of riot and debauchery.

Let not the jollity and gay humour of fots, dignified with the title of good company, tempt you to waste that time of which no man can be too provident. Busy bodies are almost as dangerous to it; they squander it in impertinence. One idle habler may be the loss of many mens time, and the talkative fool is not more guilty than the patient. Avoid alike such triflers, and the laughers, that are indebted for their mirth to the fumes of wine; false is that mirth, and the wit that makes it. Sobriety restores them to their native dulness, and they seem not to have any souls, any longer than they are foddens.

Never make yourself of any parties to pass the time only; think that a day well spent may be the day of your salvation. Is not eternity of joy worth the sacrifice of a few hours? Remember they were given you to make your peace with the offended Majesty of heaven to pray for pardon, and to lay up a treasure of good works against the great day of account, "for all our deeds done in the flesh, whether they be good, or whether they be evil".

There is no man so much involved in worldly business, but his soul, in the greatest hurry of it, may by an ejaculation take a flight to heaven. Such starts of devotion and piety are a pleasing offering to God, who would never be forgotten by his children. Thus may your time be as truly improved by your trade as by your worship, and by your own short prayers, as by the long offices of those who have no labour nor useful employment to fill it up.

In whatever you spend your leisure or your other hours, let it be in something reasonable and profitable, suitable to your years and capacity; not in trifles, like children, or people out of their wits. For a man may be idly busy, and the time he employs in folly and vanity is as much wasted, as that which he sleeps

sleeps or whiles away. If it answers no good end, to be employed is as pernicious as to be idle. Suit your employment to the dignity of your person; remember you are a man, and let your works answer your character. Mean or unworthy employments are the diseases of labour, and the rust of time, which it contracts not by lying still, but by being employed in filth.

Above all, take care that what you are busied about becomes a Christian, and have no mixture of sin in it. He who labours in the service of avarice, or ministers to another's lust, or deals in impurity and intemperance, is idle in the worst sense. Every hour so spent runs him backward, and the remaining and shorter part of his life may not be long enough to recover what is thus mis-spent. People of condition ought to be very curious in what they employ themselves about. Wretched are they if their education has been so loose that they know not how to spend their time to any purpose; if they are forced to throw themselves into base company, purely because they cannot tell what to do when they are alone. No solitude is so frightful as that which leaves such men with themselves; and nothing so welcome as that which delivers them from such company. They that have learning know how precious every hour is, and how to improve it to be useful to themselves and the public, in arts, counsel, or arms: they that have none, should in the choice of their society observe where they can make most use of others' improvements to those nobler purposes, and associate with such as will never tempt them to any vice, nor join with them in any; as may supply their defects by instruction and example. Such as these may at least acquaint themselves with history, the laws and customs of their country, and their own domestic affairs: they may learn economy and good management, humanity to their tenants and neighbours, may

employ themselves in charitable offices, in reconciling enemies, and preventing the mischief of litigious spirits; and especially ought they to be well instructed in the lessons that have been already read to them, to lay out all the hours they have to spare from acts of necessity and charity, on religion and piety.

These reflections relate chiefly to men of quality, not but they are many of them as useful for ladies, whose time should be employed in such works as seem to be allotted them by God and nature. To take a parent's care in the education of their children is of late reckoned very uncourtly; as if quality was above nature, and title could discharge the ladies from the obligations of the divine laws. There was an age when women of the best condition prided themselves in performing Christian duties, in visiting and assisting the sick, comforting and relieving the poor; but shew and vanity usurp now the places of reason and duty. How unmannerly would a tedious discourse be on their duties, as wives, daughters, mothers? Would they forgive the prelate who should preach to them as one of the fathers of our church does; "be courteous to your neighbours, learn in silence of your husbands and spiritual guides, read good books, pray often, and speak little;" learn to do works for necessary uses; by which the reverend prelate tells us, the sacred writ intends good housewifery and charity: virtues that, rare as they are, shine still in some of our noblest families, brighter even than nobility itself.

Foppery and wantonness of dress are of all things unbecoming a Christian life; a worse employment men and women of all conditions cannot be busied about: to indulge the appetite too much, as it is prejudicial to the health of the body, so also is it to that of the soul; not only by taking up too much time in contriving how to regulate the palate, but by
 pampering

pampering the flesh, and preparing it for temptation. Moderate food and apparel distinguished the first Christians, who, upon their conversion, renounced, as we all do now by our baptismal vow, the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, the luxury of diet and dress.

Those that are over-curious, and always enquiring after things which concern them not, unprofitably employ their time. The bearing and hearing of tales is often attended with scandal and backbitings, vices for which Christians, who have a new commandment "to love one another," should have an abhorrence. How it has prevailed lately, we have been sad witnesses of; meddlers with other mens matters, have infected the world with a malignant spirit of slander. So far only should we be concerned for our neighbours, as to pity their distresses, and relieve their wants. If unnecessary and fantastical visits are forbidden us under the vice of idleness, what will become of great part of the ladies time, and how will they account for it? It is now a piece of good breeding to ramble three or four days in a week from house to house, not in doing good, but in doing nothing, and to sit at home the rest of it, expecting as great triflers as themselves. Dress, meals, visit, park, opera, and play, take up all the hours that are not given by them to sleep; in which, if the morning is not spent, dress consumes it all: the noon is not long enough for dinner, the afternoon is loitered away in the park, and the rest of the day at the theatres: what part of it can they spare for the church and the closet? what part of it do they dedicate to God, who will most surely demand his share, at the last judgment, and eternally punish those that have defrauded him of it? Recreations, as has been observed, however innocent they are in themselves, become criminal when that time is mis-spent in them, which should be applied to religious or civil uses; choose

therefore such as are healthy, short, and refreshing. Never make a business of your pleasure. He who wastes his time in sports, and calls it recreation, is like him whose coat is all made of fringes, and his meat nothing but sauces: they are healthless, expensive, and useless; none are more so than those that steal your affections from severer employments. To what you give your affections, you will not grudge to give your time. St. John diverted himself with a tame partridge, but we should not for that reason spend our time in playing with lap-dogs, or feeding Canary-birds; employments, than which none can be more innocent, if too much time is not wasted on them; none more trifling and ridiculous, if it is. The mind, like a bow, must not be always bent; it is lawful and necessary to relax it; but we must never suffer it to be unready, or unstrung. What has been said of prayer and meditation will instruct us to let nothing but a violent, sudden, and impatient necessity make us omit, one day, our morning and evening devotions: minutes, so employed, will help us to spend hours the more usefully and religiously. If the people would withdraw themselves from business and company, to offer up some short prayers or ejaculations to heaven, they would at their return learn to season them with heavenly things. These transient devotions are only justifiable in such as are busied by the cares of life: for God's work is not to be done negligently and idly; the heart must not be set upon the world, when the hand is lifted in prayer. Be sure to prefer an act of religion in its place and proper season, before all worldly pleasure. Let secular things, that may be dispensed with, wait upon spiritual. Sir Thomas More, lord high chancellor of England, being sent for by the king, when he was at his prayers in public, returned answer, "he would attend him when he had first performed his service to the King of kings:" and it did honour to Rusticus, that when letters from
Cæsar

Cæsar were given him, he refused to open them, until the philosopher had done his lecture. If that wise Roman thought such homage was due to the dispensations of human wisdom, how much more is to divine? If to know how to govern oneself in this transitory life be of more importance than imperial commands, how important is it for us to do our work for eternity?

When the clock strikes, or however else you measure the day, it is good every hour to bless it with an ejaculation, and use yourself to measure your time by your devotion, which is the most infallible way to improve it: do this also in the breaches of your sleep, that those spaces which have in them no direct business of the world, may be filled with religion.

If it has been your misfortune to have mis-spent any of your precious time, make it your first care to redeem it by repenting of what you have lost, and putting those parts of it which were wasted on trivial or criminal uses, to pious and religious ones. Give those hours especially to those graces, the contrary of which you formerly practised. If you have been so wicked as to have wasted any in luxury and uncleanness; dedicate a great part of your future life to acts of chastity and temperance. Be on the watch against present and future perils; and from time to time look out that you be in no more danger of falling; this will be to redeem it: and besides actions of religion and piety, you may buy your security of it at the price of any labour or honest arts. As a part of every day should be given to God's service; so also should a part of every year; wherein all worldly business should be quitted, and that solemn portion of it be spent in fasting and prayer, meditation and attendances upon God; in examining ourselves, to see how we grow in godliness, as we do in age. Yearly ought we to make up our accounts with

heaven; to renew our vows, and study to amend whatever has been amiss in the former part of lives. In this we shall be much assisted if we mine ourselves daily, and keep our accounts straight. Take a particular scrutiny of your actions every night before you sleep; and clear your conscience by repentance and prayer, if you have any thing charge it with, as the purest minds will always do. When the temptations of the day have been given by feasts, sports, and the like, the more strict let your examination be, the more severe your penitence, more firm your resolutions, with the divine grace be upon your guard against them for the future. If any thing but common has happened, the less need we mine ourselves: but let us never lie down, nor rest our heads to the pillow, without such a recollection for fear some sin should be forgotten, and pass by unpented of, and we should accustom ourselves to run over in our account so far, until we should be afraid to retrospect, and, like bankrupts, ruin our souls, because we durst not look into the book of our conscience. By running over the actions of every day in our minds at night, we shall find out matter of thanksgiving, as well as sorrow, and commend ourselves to God in sweet ecstasies of praise.

In observing these rules, for the useful and proper employment of our time, let us practise them with prudence and moderation, not with vexation or scruple. Let us not lay too much stress on our diligence, and think no merit greater than our good works, who have only the merits of our Redeemer rely upon. Civil employments are good advantages but many of the particulars recommended, not discommandments; they must therefore be used, as far as be found expedient to every one's condition. provided our duty be secured, the degrees and instruments of it are permitted to every man, according to his station and circumstances, and the conduct

such as are appointed to be his guides. Happy is he, who can secure every hour for pious uses; but the duty consists not scrupulously in minutes and half-hours, nor in greater or less portions of time, but in appropriating it all to the duties that are required of us as Christians and as men; remembering none of it must be spared for sin, and that without sin we cannot be idle.

Were there no other considerations than what relate to this world only, one idle person would be a scandal and a nuisance to it. From laziness came knavery and theft, poverty and beggary. The laws of man as well as God discountenance it in all well-governed states. The public exacts a part of every man's time; and there is not a man upon earth of so exalted a station, that he can say in any one minute of his life that he has nothing to do, either for himself or others. In the lower order of mankind, idleness is not sinful but criminal; and the body as well as the mind is subject to correction. As to the other world, these considerations are of the last importance on this account only, that the good use of our time prepares us for all sudden changes; and we shall not, if we have well improved it, be surprised at the sudden coming of the day of our Lord. We shall be ready and willing to render our accounts of our actions, because our days have not been evil. Evil indeed are all our days that have been best employed; but the mercy of God will accept of our repentance, when we daily beg it of him with sincerity and contrition.

Beg God's blessing, intend his honour, and willingly submit to his providence, in complying with the duty of your calling; be diligent and careful in it, and endeavour after perfection. Do not act in it with too much intemperance; nor discompose nor hurry yourselves so far as to lose the command of yourselves, and be open to the temptations of avarice and pride.

When you go from one business, or one company to another, consider how you discharged yourselves in it; that you may beg pardon for what was amiss; and having your consciences clear, may attend what you are going about with the more ease, application, and cheerfulness.

If your employment admits conversation, and your circumstances allow it, why may you not serve both worlds at once? While you are working, let your servants or children read to you, or repeat what they have learnt from the scripture and catechism, or from books of morality: or if this does not suit with your profession, there are few but may mix profitable discourses and pious thoughts with their labours.

Exact no more work of any than their strength and health enable them to perform; and take not from them all their time, who owe a portion of it to heaven as well as yourselves. You ought rather to instruct and encourage them in their devotion, than to interrupt or obstruct it: You may also make yourself accountable for their sin, of which your avarice was the occasion.

If you work for others, do it with as much diligence and integrity as if it was for yourselves; remembering that divine law, to do in all things with your neighbour, friend, or enemy, as you would be done by. Be exactly faithful in word and deed to all, and kind and charitable, according to your neighbour's wants, and your own ability.

In fine, let those who flatter themselves that they are not so much accountable for mis-spent time, as those that are obliged to use it for the necessities of life, hear what God said to Adam their father: and then, if they can, prove by what other superior law they are exempted from that same doom.

“Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife,
 “and hast eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee,
 “saying, thou shalt not eat of it; cursed is the ground for
 “thy

“ thy sake ; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of
 “ thy life. Thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee,
 “ and thou shalt eat of the herb of the field. In the sweat
 “ of thy face shalt thou eat bread, until thou return unto
 “ the ground.”

Labour is partly a command and partly a punishment : it was at first the effect of sin ; it is now the preserver of innocence. There will be no labour in heaven ; but then there will be no temptation. This life is a state of trial and action, of mutual dependence and improvement. By work is the body supported, and the mind instructed : God can inform the one and preserve the other, without our co-operation ; but he has not been pleased to give us any promise so to do : on the contrary he tells us, “ in the sweat of our face shall we
 “ eat our bread.” And the highest are subject to his command, as well as the lowest ; and no more exempted from labour, than from travel in their bringing forth. Both were the punishment of our first parents disobedience ; and it is the greatest presumption to think of altering or not complying with this fundamental law of the Creator. A contemplative life is the felicity of separated spirits ; and that eternal rest which they enjoy in heaven, the reward of those that “ fight the good
 “ fight upon earth.” The common enemy of our souls will always be tempting us to idleness ; he has us then at the greatest advantage : it is for this reason he flatters our imagination with the charms of ease, and the delights of solitude. When our thoughts are wandering, as the soul will be always in motion, it is then he surprises us, and masters them. None but our Saviour could have resisted him in the wilderness ; and the example of his being so long tempted there, is given us to shew us, that we are not of ourselves a match for the prince of the power of the air ; and that it is only the prerogative of God to be independent. If we call in the help of labour and devotion, he will find us too well prepared for his attacks, and will wait for a more

loose unguarded hour. There is no work despicable because it is mean ; if it is honest and necessary it is honourable. I am rendered important to the creation, by serving to its necessities. It has been mentioned, that princesses in old times did not disdain the distaff and needle. The golden age is painted as a pastoral one, when the kings of the earth tilled the ground, and the princes kept sheep. The mother of Christ had a carpenter to her husband ; and turtle-doves and pigeons were all the sacrifice she had to offer at the nativity of our Redeemer. What is deserving contempt which is the gift of providence ? Whatever my employment is, let me do it as chearfully and as perfectly as I can, for God's sake, and in a spirit of obedience ; that I may be of the number of those, to whom it shall be pronounced, " Well done ye good and faithful servants, &c."

In performing the duties of religion and life, diligence in both promises us alike with success; and if my diligence arises from a pious principle to please God, and considering that every thing I do is done in his presence, I shall not only have the temporal reward, but the eternal. If we give our hands to the world, let us keep our hearts from it. On whatever I am employed about, let my affections be set on things above. If, like Martha, I am cumbered with many things, I would, with Mary, be still mindful of the one thing needful.

A PRAYER for those that Labour.

“ **O** Good and gracious God, let not the cares of this
 “ world deaden the influences of thy holy spirit. Let
 “ my end in all my actions be the doing of my duty, and not
 “ worldly profit only. Let no disorder of my affections indis-
 “ pose my mind for acts of devotion. Let not a temptation to sin, or
 “ cause my overlooking opportunities of gloryfying thee,
 “ my Creator, or doing good to my neighbour. Shall I not
 “ sing thy praises at my labours, when St. Paul and Silas
 “ sang them in prison : thou commandedst the Israelites to
 “ speak

“ speak of the law, and the great things thou hadst done
 “ for them, when they went out, and when they came in
 “ Let that be my rule, oh my Lord! and let my children
 “ and servants be taught the excellent precepts of the Gos-
 “ pel, to declare thy wonderful love to man in thy only son
 “ Christ Jesus. I submit to thy providence in the work
 “ I am obliged to do for my daily bread. I look up to
 “ thee as the giver of it, and chearfully make use of the
 “ means of obtaining it. Pardon my want of know-
 “ ledge, remove my deadly ignorance, assist me with
 “ thy divine grace in my humble reading of the Scrip-
 “ tures, and attending the sacred ordinances. Let me
 “ not indulge natural pride, or sloth, in learning that
 “ which is good. Accept, oh Lord! of the improvements
 “ I make of the talents thou hast intrusted me with. Give
 “ me uprightness of heart, and forgive my unwilling
 “ mistakes.”

A PRAYER for the Rich.

“ **A** Sthou, oh Lord! hast made me able to give, make
 “ me willing, I beseech thee. Let me not waste
 “ that time in vanity and wickedness, that ought to be
 “ employed in thy service. Since thou hast set my feet on
 “ high, let my heart be also lifted up, not to despise my
 “ Brother, but to glorify thee; and by a higher prospect,
 “ endeavour to guide others in the beautiful paths of life
 “ and virtue. Give me the riches of grace, and advance
 “ me in the school of wisdom and knowledge.”

The former reflections concern chiefly that part of
 life which fits us for another world: the following
 are intended to fit us more for this, by making us agreeable
 to ourselves and others.



WIT and DELICACY.

THE character of wit is alike affected by both sexes: if learning adorns it in men, beauty gives it as much grace in women; and makes it more dangerous to those that possess it. Ladies of a lively active spirit are very apt to turn it to intrigue, which, perhaps, may begin in frolick only, but too often ends in shame. An affectation of wit, where it is not, serves only to render folly more ridiculous; it makes both men and women forward in speaking; they fancy they shew their wit when they shew their ignorance, and expose themselves to be the jest of the company, when they endeavour to be the admiration. This talkative forward humour sets such as have little wit on a level with those that have none, and spoils talents which are capable of improvement. Give them a relish of delicacy, they will soon be ashamed of that vain humour, and avoid themselves which are so fatal to impertinence. Delicacy is of the virgin kind, the less it is touched the more it is admired, and better recommended by modesty and silence, than by airs and turns of fancy, which seldom do the business they are designed for, and on the contrary, offend instead of pleasing. A young lady should never speak, but for necessity, and even then with diffidence and deference. She should never talk of things above the common reach of her age and sex, however she may be informed of them by the advantages of her quality and education. Let her not be tempted into this error by a happy memory, by a quick and pleasant imagination, by a fluency of speech,

speech, or any of those qualities, which she may enjoy in common with a great number of other women, of little sense otherwise, and in some respects, very contemptible. Her behaviour should be exact and regular, her temper even and orderly, her judgment just and upright, to know when to talk and when to be silent; and if in all her conduct there appears more discretion than humour, her other qualities will shine the brighter, and distinguish her from the rest of her sex.

This prudence is a much more necessary qualification than what is called wit: it will give her an air of authority and respect, instead of a vain and familiar one. Whatever other accomplishments she has, will, without this, want their true ornament, and have no more value without good order, than scattered flowers confusedly blown about by the wind.

There is a sort of discretion and prudence by which even the vicious preserve their reputation, and for want of which, the most virtuous lose theirs. The escapes of little excursions of wit are often the occasion of it. Young ladies, therefore, must be upon their guard, and not let things slip from their tongues which ought not to dwell in their minds. Delicacy of thought will help them to avoid this wreck; nothing can be delicate that is not true and innocent. Pertness of fancy and expression has a false delicacy, which glares perhaps in conversation, but never pleases. The surest sign of want of wit is a fondness of shewing it; those that have it are sparing of a treasure which is so rare and uncommon. True wisdom is like the lamps of the ancient sepulchres, which lasted so long light as they were under ground, and were extinguished as soon as they took air. Wit indeed, if true, shines out, but never but when it is sure of striking, and to have the effect it intended.

To affect a nice taste of things, without discernment, is like judging of painting without sight. The best taste in the conduct of life in the accommodating
our-

38 RECREATIONS.

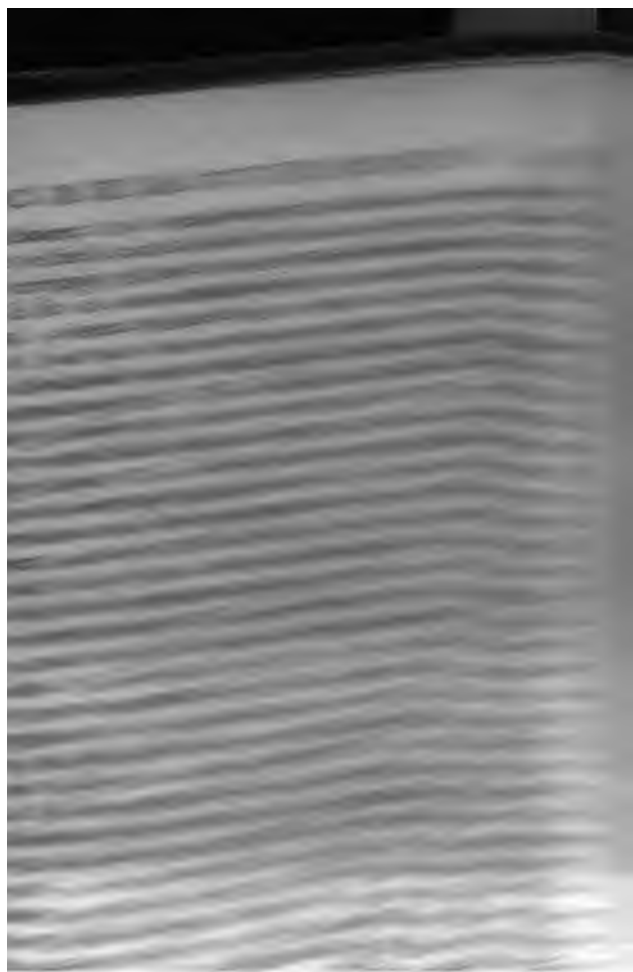
ourselves to affairs, according as they are more or less useful. Nothing is really estimable but good sense and virtue; both of which make us look upon dissipation and niceness, not as laudable delicacies, but rather as the weakness of a sick mind or body.

Since we are to live in the world with the dull and rude, as well as with the polite and witty; since our affairs will not be always so very delicate; reason, the only true delicacy, bids us to be polite with the polite, and delicate with the delicate; to suit our behaviour to our company, and as that is, to be either witty or dull; if it is in our power to be either, let us be one or the other. A disgusting temper makes us uneasy both to ourselves and others. If we distaste every thing, every body will distaste us; and he who imagines that by being over-nice he may get the character of being wise, may probably meet with that of being overwise, agreeably to the state of a modern critic, whose over-wisdom and over-delicacy have turned at last into downright madness.



RECREATIONS.

OF the two sexes, the softer one has more need of advice in the use of their diversions; there are more eyes upon them, from the other sex to admire and please them, than from their own to observe and censure. Besides the temptations of their own hearts, they have those of the men to struggle with; and if they shew the least disposition to pleasure, they will find enough to encourage them in it. To be eager in the pursuit of it, while they are young, is dangerous; to catch at it, when they are old, is catching at a shadow: when it becomes less natural, it grows to be indecent. Diversions are for such as are



oppress than please. These jolly dames so continually seek diversion, that in a little time they grow into a jest, yet are unwilling to remember that if they were seldomer seen, they would not be so often laughed at. Who will chuse to look on a face he is sure to see to-morrow, who to-day has a new one to entertain him? The ladies grow cheap by growing familiar, and cheap is the unkindest word that can be bestowed upon the sex.

To game a little for the diversion of yourself or your company, has no harm in it; but to do it so often as to be called a gamester, is to be avoided next to things that are criminal. And if gaming is a vice in men, it is much more so in women; for that one of its consequences is often the loss of what is much more valuable than gold or diamonds, their reputation, if not their honour. It engages both in a habit of idleness and ill hours, draws them into mixt company, makes them neglect their civilities abroad, and their business at home; in a word, the gamester, whether man or woman, has neither God, father, husband, or friend; at least they live as if they had neither, and give up to chance the empire of providence.

The objections are much stronger still to the ladies than to the men, with respect to deep play; it gives occasion to the world to ask spiteful questions: how they dare venture to lose? and what means they have to pay such great sums? The winner and the loser are alike in danger: if she wins, it puts her into so good a humour nothing can put her into an ill one; if she loses, she runs in debt, and there are more ways than one to discharge it. The debtor is at the mercy of the creditor, and exact are both sexes in paying these debts of honour. If the ladies pay in money, it will be asked how they come by it? If they owe, and especially to a man, he will be thought no unfair creditor, if, when the estate fails, he seizes upon the person. Add to this, if a lovely woman could see her own face upon

[illegible]

neighbour, cannot be lawful diversion; and proud and wanton discourse, scandal and slander, are certainly not to be delighted in, or to be any part of employment of our time. All recreation must moderate as well as innocent. Minutes, and days or hours, should only be given to them: the purpose of diversion is not to exempt us from labour, but to fit us for it. If our passions are too much affected by our recreations, if we have them too much at heart, they are no longer lawful, because they take off our minds from our spiritual or temporal duties; we shall be like school-boys, who after play time cannot settle to their books again. Time, as has been observed, is to be redeemed, and not flung away; and when we consider what a great work we have here to do, and how uncertain we are how long we shall have to do it, we should rather seek for recreation in the sublime meditations on the wonderful works of the Almighty, than in the follies and trifles of this transitory life.

Little need have we to contrive ways to while away our time, which flies so fast from us, and returns no more. Remember this, you that loiter away your days, and revel away your nights: remember the idle gamesters, by whom days and nights are consumed through an insatiable lust of gain. That is the most extravagant instance of avarice, rendering almost impossible to game and not to sin. For if it be any way lawful, it is when we play for nothing considerable; otherwise we shall fall into the vices of covetousness, and take pleasure in winning, or transported with rage at ill luck in losing; both vices seldom come unattended. Covetousness will tempt you to trick at least, if not to cheat; and anger will swear, and perhaps blaspheme. Go to a gaming table at the publick places, see the transports of winners and losers at Bath, Tunbridge, Epsom, and then ask yourself, can diversions, that so en-

and disorder the soul, that keep it in a perpetual tumult of passion, that make men forget what they owe

God and to men, can they be lawful? The contrary speaks itself, and whoever sins this way, does it against conviction, and in defiance of the Almighty. Those that find themselves too much inclined to game, and have not a due government of their passions at it, will do well to lay themselves under some voluntary and suitable mulct, that the tie of interest may help to restrain them. Yet one would think that Christians, who are bid to pluck out their very eyes, and cut off their very hands if they offend them, should not need to be instructed to part with unnecessary sports, rather than to fall into temptation. He that plays sinfully risks his soul at stake, which is surely of too great worth to be ventured on the cast of a die. Those that give themselves up to gaming, make it no more recreation. Such a man toils as much at it as he who labours for work; is there any so painful as that of the land, as the hopes and fears of the covetous man, and the impatience and rage of the angry?



DRESS.

For dress, as we are told in Scripture, was to cover nakedness, it seems in our days not to answer the end of it, especially with the ladies; who, one would imagine by their dress, are so far from reckoning themselves obliged to their mother Eve, for dressing them, that they are for throwing away the very fig-leaves; they have already uncovered their shoulders and breasts, and as they have gone so far in a few months, what may they not do in years? They should consider that clothes were not the effect of pride, but of sin, and that instead of making them vain, it should humble and

and mortify them, as having lost that innocence which was a much greater ornament to them than the most glorious apparel can be. Since shame was the original of clothing, it ought to be modest, and all fashions which are not so, are sinful; arguing the wantonness of the wearer, and provoking that of the spectator; both which carry sin in them.

The defending the body from cold seems to be, to many, not a principal, but an accidental end of apparel. Naked breasts and naked bosoms, in both sexes, shew us that health, as desirable as it is, is not considered by youth, when any strong passion is in the way. Those ladies that would catch cold at the fanning of a summer-evening's breeze, bear the rudest winter-blasts, to lay open their breasts and shoulders; the most delicate of them are insensible of wind or weather. Would one not believe they are so warmed within, that they are insensible of cold from without? And what must men think of such women, who will indure so much to be so much seen? Nothing in the world is so easily communicated as desire; and instead of mortifying it, the very churches are the places that help now to inflame it; people dress for them as wantonly as for the play-house: and a woman has not any beauty which she will not take care to expose there to advantage. Hence it is, that divine service, instead of raising men and women's souls in devotion to the great Creator, is often made use of to convey wanton glances to each other; and when they pretend to be praying to be delivered from temptation, they with pleasure give themselves up to it. God, who will not be mocked, knows the heart, and will at the last day call them to a dreadful account for this wicked abuse of holy ordinances.

Another end of apparel is the distinguishing of sexes and qualities, which, like the other two ends of it, modesty and health, is neglected and despised. Women, without blushing, assume the coat, periwig, hat and feather, and ride as furiously as if there was really nothing

n sex, or they desired there should be no dif-

What a mean opinion must such ladies have of the delicacy of the heiress of Burgundy, granddaughter of Charles the fifth, who falling from her horse, king her thigh, refused the assistance of the king and chuse to die rather than have her wounded. God himself expressly commanded that the man should not wear the apparel of the woman nor the woman that of the man: but our late politicians, think the Jewish laws do not bind Christians, and resolving at any rate to please, they wear a hat or a head, as it sets them off best. To shew that the quality of dress was one of the ancient virtues: The Romans were very strict in their severall laws. "Gorgeous apparel is for kings courts," Cicero himself tells us. Men and women should distinguish themselves with that sort of clothing which becometh their sex and condition, not striving to equal that of a higher rank, nor raise envy in the mind. What difference is there now between the dress of a citizen and a courtier, of a taylor and a gentleman, of a servant and a master? The maid is very mistaken for the mistress, and the valet for my lord. The general depravity of men's minds appears as much in the corruption, as in any; the neglect of decency, the confusion of ranks and degrees, the contempt of them; and men fail in the respect they owe to superiors. "Honour to whom honour," is the law of the gospel, which are forgotten, and live in all things, as if they were their own masters, and had no rule to walk by but their wills. The folly in dress has been so well ridiculed by men of sense, that we are less troubled with it than ever. While modesty was only, and was ranked under the heads of the sins of vanity, while damnation was only the punishment which flourished again; but now it is become a jest, and is sure to be laughed at; he avoids that for which he is ashamed of his character, which he would not have done for the sake of his salvation.

Clothes

Clothes add no true worth to any one, and it is therefore foolish as well as sinful to waste time or thought in dress. Beauty needs no ornament, and deserts none, but what we ought all to covet, "that a meek and quiet spirit". Clothe yourselves as richly as you can with all christian virtues, which can render you lovely in God's eyes, and will not a little help to render you amiable in those of man. The beauty of the mind charms more than that of the body, and no beauty of it is so charming as virtue. Christ will incline you to look to your neighbour's clothes as well as your own. To "clothe the naked" is one of the duties that have eternal bliss for their reward; the saying of a good Christian on that subject, though homely one, is a solid one, "one plain coat thou put upon a poor man's back will better become thee than twenty rich ones thou shalt put upon thy own."

Youth is very apt to run into error in dress. Vanity proceeds from levity of mind, for which the young and especially of the softer sex want ballast; they have an inborn violent desire of pleasing; the love of which leads men to authority and glory being shut from them, they strive to make amends for that loss by the graces of their person. And it is on this account that the colour of a ribbon, the curl of the hair, or setting on a patch too high or too low, are with them matters of importance. This excess is become extravagant, and we are not satisfied with our own manners and fashions, but are made after those of our neighbours. Thus to the love of dress is added the love of novelty. They do bewitch weak minds, and fill them with pride and folly drive out every good thought and choke the seeds of religion and virtue. The states have not only set rules for habits, but also for the furniture of houses, and the decorations of gardens. Our neighbouring state, that of the United Provinces, restrained by a law the extravagant expence of flowery dresses, and our own statute-books shew us, that several

men made with respect to clothes, which are not unreasonable for their being obsolete. The and tables of private persons not being regulated by public authority, every one lives according to fortune and ambition; and perhaps a regulation of abuses would not be thought consistent with the of a free-people. The Romans made laws to restrain eating, grown to an extravagant expence by Asiatic luxury, introduced by their eastern conquerors.

But those laws were not effectual, and if real laws do not direct people not to waste their health and estates on superfluities, edicts and statutes will be of no force, and sickness and poverty will only remain. How ruinous this pomp has been to families is too notorious to need explanation. The ruin of families draws after it corruption of manners, and follows the ruin of states.

Vanity excites in persons of mean birth an insatiable desire of gain, which prostitutes them to all trades that may get them wealth to support it. It draws a people of quality so deeply into debt, that they are obliged to dip their estates beyond recovery, but do so to buy a few mean things which an honest poor man would be ashamed of, to maintain their expence. How often has the gilt coach been seized by the mercer, and all the furniture been the prey of executions? How scandalous is it to see a gentleman's gate crowded with creditors, while the lord himself sneaks out at the back-door, to mock their impatience, and laughs at their cre-

dit! Modes and fashions are the main causes of this extravagance: dress and furniture must be changed according to the whim of the upholsterer, and tailor, or those capricious men and women who preside over them. Inconstancy creates a vast loss in what you are content with, and as great an expence in what you are in chase of. The seller will have cunning enough to make you pay for your love of novelty, and the cheat you as much for your desire of change.

The

The mind is thus constantly taken up with this variety; gravity and simplicity of manners exploded, and levity and folly take place of them.

Ladies and gentlemen should learn, that true honour is acquired by nothing but good conduct, that good sense is preferable to either gold ormonds. The young should often be put in things useful and solid, but not so often as to tire with your lectures. Endeavour, you that are teachers, to divert the thoughts of the ladies, cially from a vain affectation of the beauty of body, by drawing them to a consideration of the mind; not that outward beauty is to be neglected and it would be too severe a lesson to teach it to as nature has been liberal to. Whoever shall to act the philosopher on this head, will sooner himself ridiculous than his pupil wife. Beauty has sensible effects in those that possess it, and in that behold it, for them to be convinced by all grave arguments, that it is not worth taking care. If you advise them not to set their hearts too upon it, you must at the same time let them you are sensible that the heart will be touched by and that, as it is one of the greatest of temporal things, so they should be thankful for it to heaven; regard it as the gift of God; to preach against it will be to as little purpose as to preach against his riches, and peace. All these blessings may be at as well as that of beauty; but it will not hinder the world from desiring them, and from envying those that enjoy them. The chief thing you have to do is to give young persons true notions of nature, and to show them how religion improves and betters it; how it turns every thing to its true end; what great wisdom it is to make temporal blessings instrumental to eternal and the excellencies of the body subservient to the use of the soul; that religion and virtue are the greatest beauties in Christians, and Christianity the highest

exalt

exaltation of nature, and of right reason. To rail at beauty would be as impertinent as to rail at light : give it, on the contrary, its due praise ; confess it has a natural splendor, lovely in itself, and charming to the beholder ; but tell those amiable creatures, that if a lovely soul animates a lovely body, the charms of beauty receives new graces. Piety gives a check to lust, and turns desire into admiration. Virtue and beauty joined together have great advantages above virtue alone appearing in a homely dress ; but if virtue gives not much lustre, it has fewer temptations and is a lasting blessing. Beauty wears and decays, virtue shines on with one continued brightness ; beauty occasions daily torments and disquiets, virtue is always full of peace and joy ; beauty however will always find advocates, and plead for itself so strongly, that let us declare as warmly as we will on the side of virtue, we must not abandon that of beauty, but inculcate the mischiefs that attend the priding one's self in it, and setting one's mind too much upon it. Beauty has as well power over the judgment as over the eyes, and it is more eligible to make it a friend to virtue than an enemy.

It is said of the judges at Athens, who were so celebrated over all the world for their justice, that by a woman they lost the name of uncorrupt, because, though she was faulty, yet after they had seen her they could not judge her guilty. Another lady, as famed for her eloquence as her antagonist was for her beauty, had by her pleading won the cause, until the lovely creature came into court, and by her presence only, turned the scale of justice. Nothing more cheats and imposes on the judgment than beauty, and the Athenian lady is not the only one that has gained her cause by shewing herself. Yet after all, the victory is imaginary, not real : the more victorious beauty is, the more is it exposed to be conquered. That which many love, is not easily guarded ; the heart may resist the at-

tacks of several open invaders, but while it is defending itself against them, a secret one will steal in and surprise it. What security is there in the possession of a thing that every one covets? The more that beautiful women conquer, the more danger they are in: new besiegers will come to the assault, and how can that fort always defend itself from without, which has a traitor ready to betray it from within? Flattery, like the voice of the Siren, draws them on to their ruin; the heart greedily sucks in the poison, and when they are infinitely pleased themselves, they think it is a sort of ingratitude not to be pleasing. Nothing, therefore, is more dangerous and deceitful than celebrated beauty. It deceives the person that possesses it more than those that are dazzled with it: It disturbs, weakens, and intoxicates the soul. There are some ladies so fond of their own faces, that they have not so strong rivals in the other sex as they are to themselves. But age will not fail to punish them for this idolatry, and the wrinkles in their faces shall in their turns make them look as hideous as ever their charms made them lovely in their own eyes. What is it that young ladies propose to themselves by the mighty pains they are at to appear beautiful? Is it to gain lovers or husbands? Dare they answer for the former? No; they will hardly own they have any meaning at all in it, and do not think of men, when their whole soul is employed in contriving to charm them. Let us suppose for them that they have a lawful end in view, to marry to their advantage: how can they hope to have good husbands if they have not wise ones? And beauty without merit and virtue, is a bait for fools. To marry happily, a woman must marry prudently, and if she makes choice of a fop, she will not be the happier, as she is not the wiser, for her beauty. Let her think that the shining lustre, even of youth, wears off, when seen too often, and at too near a distance: that possession sees with other eyes than desire, and that
beauty

beauty will not make an ill-natured fellow a good husband, nor a silly woman a good wife; wisdom will be too hard for the frowardness of a pevish temper, which is softened by management more than beauty: a man cannot see it when he is out of humour; then art and complacency will open his eyes, and restore it to its former empire. What a curse is it to ladies to have this pride of beauty last when they are old? How ridiculous is it in them to confound age and youth, to fill up and hide the breaches of time with patches and paint; to place the gay decorations of twenty on a withered carcase of threescore? yet how many examples of this kind do we daily meet with in the world; Women that think their beauty is the last thing that fades, and that their spring holds all the year? These reflections on beauty have interrupted those on dress; they cannot however be termed a digression, for why else do women dress out as they do, unless it is to be handsome?

Affectation in dress always misses the end it aims at, and raises contempt instead of admiration. Negligence is on the other hand an error that ought to be corrected; neatness, proportion, and decency of dress, are always commendable. Virtue itself is disagreeable in a sloven; and that lady who takes no care of herself will find no body will care for her. The fault is the excess: mind your persons, but mind your understandings too, and do not be fools to be beaux and belles. Look on the simplicity of the ancients in their statues; observe especially the figures of the Greek and Roman ladies, you will find the hair tied negligently behind, the draperies full, and carelessly hanging, which give grace and majesty to the body. I doubt not, women that are not well instructed in these things, would by the statues have a sorry opinion of the antique dresses; but when they are well taught what elegance, what proportion, and what convenience there are in them, they will be apt to think that

the ladies of Athens and Rome were as much politer than the moderns in their dress as the men in their learning. A very learned prelate of this age has endeavoured to restore antique habits; but all that endeavour to govern the nation of fops, will find they have to do with a most unruly people, whose heads being never settled, how can we expect their habits should be? Were women's souls, says the bishop, ever so little elevated above the prejudices of fashions, they would presently have a great contempt for their affected curlings and frizlings, which are so remote from the natural hair, and for dresses of too fashionable and exact figure. I am satisfied, it is not at all to be expected they should take up an antique outside, it would be an extravagant thing to desire it: but yet they might without any singularity, take the relish of the ancient simplicity in habits, which is so noble, so gracious, so comely; and besides, so proper for Christian manners. Thus conforming themselves to the present customs, they would understand at least what they ought to think of the old one: they would hereby learn to obey the mode as a troublesome slavery; and then would only allow it what they could not refuse it. Let ladies, above all things, consult decency and ease; never to expose nor torture nature. Fashion is always aiming at perfection, but never finds it, or never stops where it should: it is always mending, but never improving: a true labour in vain; and consequently those that follow it, are guilty of the highest folly and madness. To change for the sake of changing, is to submit to the government of caprice; and that man or woman that is given up to it, will surely be as whimsical in the other parts of their conduct. Is it sufficient for a reasonable mind, to like a thing purely because it is new, or to dislike it because it is not? must a foolish fashion please me, for that it is a novelty, and a good one displease, because I have tried it and found it so? If fops reckon wise men out of their wits when they are out of the fashion, wise men have certainly much more ground to think them mad when they are in it.

These

These considerations would arise from right reason, if we had not the divine light of scripture to be our guide. As men only, we should avoid foppery and extravagance; as Christians, we should study modesty and convenience. There are two passages in the new testament, which set the best rule, particularly to women with respect to their habits, "Let not your adorning, says the apostle, be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel, but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." And again, "In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broidered hair, or gold or pearls, or costly array, (but which becometh women professing godliness) with good works." Those who contrive every thing in the sacred writings to the letter, will run into innumerable errors. Many thousand heresies have sprung up from this pretended scrupulous exactness. If allowances are not to be made for figurative expressions, we should meet with insuperable difficulties. The ancient and eastern way of thinking and writing, cannot in all things be accommodated to the western and modern. Our duty then is to keep as close to the sense as we can, and not always to be confined to the letter. The Quakers interpret these passages of scripture, as a prohibition to women to wear gold, either in ear-rings, or about their clothes; either in lace, or interwoven, or embroidered, and all plaiting of hair: it is true, they have lately enlarged their borders, and taken or rejected what part of the prohibition suited their fancies best. Costly apparel is as much forbidden as lace; yet what people are at greater cost in their silks and linnen? But habits of price, and all pearls and jewels, necklaces or bracelets, and clothes of expence, are not to be understood in the strict and literal sense; the nature of the thing requires it

not any more than the way and manner of expression.

No body can discern any greater danger and malignity in gold or rich habits, than in any other metal, other stones, or coarser garments. Whether it be the wisdom, or folly, or the fancy of people, that has set a greater value upon these things than on others, is no matter, there is certainly no greater evil in one than another; they are all in their own natures alike innocent; and though they prove sometimes the occasions of great mischiefs, yet they are never properly the causes of them, but the passions and desires of people towards them; who, to compass them, will take courses which must consequently produce mischievous effects. They are in this case, not unlike to good countries, that border on the kingdoms of two mighty princes; who, finding their convenience, fall to wars about them, though the countries gave no provocation or encouragement to either. If the weight, lustre, or rarity give these things any extraordinary excellence above others, the delight and pleasure people take therein is but reasonable; and whatever evils follow thence, are by no means chargeable upon those inanimate things, but on the men that cause them. These things naturally are no worse than light and lustre in the sun, shape and comeliness in a tree, or beauty, fragrance, and variety of form and colour in the flowers and herbs. They are all of them God's creatures, and consequently good. The Creator has made nothing in vain; and of what other use are these glorious parts of his creation than that to which man puts them? When by great industry and toil he has dug the ore out of the mine, and the diamond out of the rock; when he has refined, with a great toil, the one, and polished the other; shall he not have the pleasure of using them? Were these riches intended to be hid for ever in the bowels of the earth? Has he erred in tearing them up to take
them

out of them? Or were they concealed there by silence to give a price to them, by the difficulty about of their discovery? Can they be better yed, if they must be employed at all, than in ornaments to the most beautiful part of mankind, for whom the world, and all that is in it, was created?

posing pearls, diamonds, and other such treasures acquire their value and esteem from the opinion of the world, and peoples fancies, and that this be ill judged, and run out into a blameable excess, yet it is reasonable to think that they are all of them absolutely prohibited, because men entertain false notions and are deceived in them. Men have as much reason to value these as any other material things what-

If we can judge of beauty or of usefulness, is there more useful and beautiful? Whether worth lies in opinion or judgment; yet as the world was formerly, is now, and always will be or it is absolutely necessary, that some things should be counted of greater value and excellence than others; there could be otherwise no living in the world: trade or commerce could be carried on without exchange and bargain. And if the wisdom of all the world, in all ages, has centered in this, that such things should be accounted best and highest, it is great presumption that they are the most excellent and valuable things. It is a right demonstration that it is necessary to account them so, and that such opinion is well enough grounded; because it is of absolute necessity, that such things should be reckoned best, and better than others: and nothing has at any time prevailed above such things in civilized countries. If then any thing is better than another, what must it be that gives it a

Its beauty, its brightness, its solidity. Are there more valuable qualities in other things, or are pearls and gold deservedly reckoned the riches of the world? Are not riches blessings, the reward of

industry, and the instruments of charity, the most amiable of all Christian virtues ?

It may be objected, that the Indians parted with their gold and pearls, for glass and trifles to their first discoverers : but it does not thence follow, that what the common esteem of mankind makes valuable is not truly so ; for though glass and gold are of equal value to a man that neither uses, nor knows how to make use of either ; yet to one that does both, they are very unequal : and when the Indians knew how much their traders valued gold, what a deal of glass, and other gaudy things were to be bought by a little of it, they grew wiser, and learned its excellence. Nevertheless it must be owned, that if all the world should set a stamp of value upon glass, or any thing else, it would bring the now cheap ornaments of it, used by mean people, under the same prohibition as gold and diamonds are said to be, by the two texts before cited ; and nobody will pretend that to wear them now is unlawful ; and therefore to wear ornaments of diamonds, or gold, cannot be so of themselves, but must be made so by the pride and extravagance of those that wear them.

If we consider the way and manner of expression in those two texts, though it is very positive, yet the meaning of the words is not absolutely to prohibit people the using of gold, pearls, and precious stones in their apparel. To find out what is really meant by it, we must examine some other passage of scripture, where the negative is as strong, and yet the prohibition cannot in the least be thought to be general. We are forbidden “ to lay up
“ treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt,
“ and where thieves break through and steal, but to lay up
“ for ourselves treasures in heaven.” Though the expression here be very positive, yet the meaning of these words is not absolutely to prohibit people to treasure up wealth ; for the necessities and duties of life make it unavoidable. There can be no provision made for families and
children

works will do ; as also such decent, grave, external habit, as would answer and become those good works ; give no scandal and offence, and minister no temptations to another. Such a design is no way obstructed by a moderated and well regulated use of all or any of these ornaments ; and therefore, there is neither need nor reason to conclude, that all or any of these particulars here mentioned are universally forbidden to women, either from the nature of the things themselves, or from the way and manner of expression, or from the end proposed by the apostle.

But notwithstanding it may be reasonable to think, this prohibition is not to be understood literally and strictly, yet something is undoubtedly forbidden by it ; as all such gaiety and costliness of attire, as provoke pride, and foster vanity. Every thing sinful, and tending to God's dishonour, is here prohibited ; and if either newness, rarity, or richness of dress, occasion vanity and pride, they are certainly here condemned. It is true, it seems difficult to be conceived, what kind of pride it is that can be raised in people's minds on these accounts ; how they can think more highly of themselves than others, and than they ought to do, because they have other clothes ; and are what they call better dressed than they are. Be it what it will, it is evident that the effect, and not the cause, is here forbidden, since the cause is every thing by which the fancy is blown up ; and it is not only gold, pearls, and costly apparel, that blow it up, but any thing that people put a value and esteem upon, and think it raises them above their neighbours : For it is not the riches of a thing that is always the ground of its esteem ; if it is of less price and more modish it is more desired, and more valued by the wearer ; and if loose and flowing hair were fashionable, it would occasion more pride and vanity than the plaiting or broidering it. Who does not know that the things that cost most do not always please best ? they must be in the fashion also ; and if they do not please, and are not fashionable,

able, they are not so apt to create that secret, vain complacency in the mind, which arises from the conceits that what they wear becomes them, and sets them in rank above their neighbours: wherefore it is plain, that this kind of pride, whatever it is, is not grounded upon costliness or worth, but upon comeliness and fashion; for that people would be proud of toys and tinsel, straws and rushes, if the court and city brought them into a mode: and one cannot doubt, but that vain fellows were as proud in their Doyley stuffs, when they were in the mode, as in their embroidered coats; and that women may have as much pride in calicoes as in brocades. Since it is haughtiness and conceit of mind which the scripture intends to forbid; therefore diamonds, gold, rich clothes, or plaited hair, are not particularly intended, any farther than they prove the occasion of that conceit and haughtiness; because other mean things, if in fashion and use, occasion them as commonly and as certainly as the most costly things. Is not a lady as proud of her straw hat and country habit as of her park and play-dress, for that it makes her please as well, she thinks, and to please is the end of all dress, in the light vein?

What has been said for the matter of attire, is also said as true, for the manner of it. No one particular mode either is or can possibly be forbidden, as that which necessarily occasions this vanity and levity, because it is not this or that particular fashion that only occasions levity or vanity: for another dress does the same thing when it is become the mode; and it is foolish to imagine such a mode is the proudest that ever was, since people are alike proud in all; and few or none were ever proud of their dress if they thought it out of fashion, or did not wear it in spite and opposition to the fashion. No body can imagine a great lady would never throw aside her forehead-cloth; and another, as great a one, her high-crowned hat, out of a spirit of humility: such are as proud in singularity as others in the fashions.

Whatever

Whatever pride arises from, dress is owing chiefly to the opinion people have, that what they wear is modish and becoming; wherefore all fashions are very near alike hazardous, one as the other, and as apt to raise the conceit of weak and trifling minds. If fashion be the most obvious and apparent ground of vanity, and the foundation of this foolish pride, it must certainly be reasonable, if not absolutely necessary, to avoid conformity and compliance with it. This would be a natural consequence of the effects of mode, if those effects were true, which they are not, since the avoiding the fashion would signify nothing at all. For what is on this account absolutely necessary to some, is as necessary to all. If one must not be proud and vain, neither must another be so; if one must avoid the common and ordinary occasion of pride, so must another, so must all. Now it is impossible for all to avoid the fashion, for if all avoided it, how could any thing be the fashion? And that which all or most agree in, and consent to, will be necessarily the fashion: so all peoples avoiding the fashion would be only setting up another fashion, if they all fell into one and the same; or leaving every one to their own fancies and whimsies, it would occasion as much, and perhaps more pride, than all their agreeing in one. There would be emulation and outliving one another; envy would be added to pride, and neither levity or richness of dress be a whit the more abated for it. Upon the whole, the general consent of most wearers makes a dress modish, and when that has once prevailed, it unavoidably becomes the standard and measure of decency. If we think a fashion awkward and unbecoming, it is because we have not long enough been used to it, or do not find it generally approved, or because it has been long laid aside; but to think it sinful to follow a fashion, because new, and to conform in these cases to custom, is to set up our own imaginations against the whole world's, not only of our time, but of all former times, whose
modes

modes and garbs have all along been very different: and though some appear more antic and extravagant than others, yet that proceeds rather from a fondness of our own conceits and customs, and a liking to what we have been used to in our own nation and times, than from any true grounds in nature or in reason. To conclude, that one fashion is more proud and sinful than another, argues weakness of judgment, or want of consideration: not that some sort of fashions do not minister more to wantonness and immodesty than others, and take up much more time, and hinder people from doing the good they would otherwise do; but that one fashion is prouder than another, is not at all evident, though it is commonly thought so.

When things are generally decry'd without any reason, or good foundation, good and honest people are scandalized at they know not what, and scruples are begotten in some weak minds which they cannot easily get rid of. Such as have been mistaken to a compliance with a literal sense of these injunctions, are apt uncharitably to censure such as have not taken these injunctions to be general and unlimited, and have innocently followed the fashions. This censoriousness is a much greater fault than what they condemn, and perhaps has more pride in it than they imagine others take in their dress. The superiority they secretly assume over them, by their pretended innocence, is more exalted than any thing that can arise from conceit of habit. And let these over-scrupulous men and women think what they please, until they can discover the unreasonableness and unlawfulness of complying with the customs of the times, which are not in themselves sinful; or until they can discover a better standard of decency than the general consent of people, there is no reason to judge otherwise than that the common garb is innocent and safe. It may indeed become the occasion of peoples pride and vanity, and so in any thing else; wherefore when
we

we find ourselves exalted by such trifles, and humbled by forbearing them, it is our duty to quit and change them immediately; for the best endowments of body and mind cannot excuse conceit of ourselves, or contempt of others, and much less any gay attire, that is truly none of ours, but borrowed from the earth and sea, and birds and beasts, and little ugly insects, and only serve to conceal our imperfections and deformities.

Virtue and good qualities must needs run very low, when people seek for honour and esteem from such poor vanities as these, and scorn and injure too, perhaps, their neighbours for the want of them; of which if they had but a little more, they would envy and hate them: not that every act of complacency in apparel, or every thought, that such and such a thing becomes them better than another, is sinful, but the excess of such complacency, and the setting a greater esteem upon themselves, and a less on others, than is due upon these silly accounts; which elate the hearts of foolish creatures with idle fancies of dignity and honour, and withdraw them from more grave and serious objects, on which they might and should be better employed. The applause that arises from niceness or richness of dress, is apt to puff up such airy spirits, though at the bottom it is false, and so generally accompanied with envy, that it is far from being an advantage to the persons to whom it is given. If you are complimented on the gaiety or cost of your clothes, when present, you are sure to be rallied when absent for your affectation in the choice of them, or your awkwardness in wearing them.

Ladies are loth to allow any excellency in each other that they have not themselves in as great perfection, and there is a way of setting off native beauty with ease and innocence, which will charm, without the danger of running outward ornaments into folly and extravagance. It is a hard matter to dress age and deformity into beauty; whereas any thing with decency

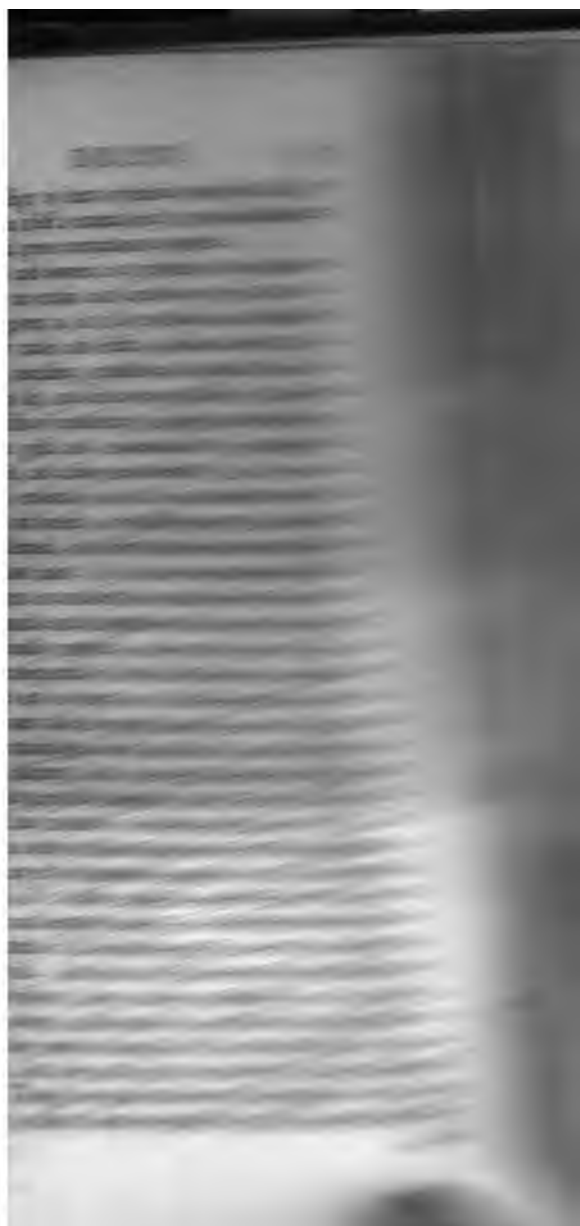
will look well on those whom nature has given looks to; and this consideration should have weight with the sex, if the other more serious one cannot move them; which would be very much to be lamented, since the beauty and grace they aim at in their dress, if they attain it, is no such mighty prize; a creature of the imagination, born and nourished in idleness, and lost by humour, and a thousand accidents.

This we may rest assured of, that all such attire as tends to looseness and immodesty is forbidden by the nature: and this not only if it be designed to serve wicked purposes, but also if it has a natural, and, or an usual tendency to it: the design itself is odious; the heating of the fancy, the inflaming the heart, the kindling impure desires that will at last consume both body and soul, is what one should think of but with terror and abhorrence. To comply with this design, is, to be sure, not only blameworthy but damnable, without repentance: It is the worst that can be done, and all they can do; for nothing is wanting on their side to complete the sin. Ask yourselves, ye, ye of the weaker sex, when you are putting on those odious and unnatural paints. Why do I redden my cheek, and whiten this forehead? Why hide that ruddy tinge, and expose that charm? What is it for but to heat and inflame, and to raise those passions which are afraid the ruins of time or accident would otherwise raise? Be not anxious that the beauties of nature will not render you agreeable enough; if you would not be more agreeable than consists with modesty and virtue, think on what has been said before with the utmost truth, that to dress with design to please unlawfully, is to dress to damnation. As the design's taking effect, does not at all depend upon you, neither will its missing its effect excuse you, or diminish any thing of your guilt or punishment.

Those

Those whose only intent in dressing is to appear gracious and amiable in the sight of people, and to gain affection and good-will, may consider this general rule, that the intending any thing is more or less innocent in itself, and would be, should the intention take effect. If to appear gracious and amiable be, in itself, good, bad, or indifferent, the intending to appear so, whether it take effect or no, will be good, bad, or indifferent accordingly; wherefore to know how far you may dress with this design, you must demand of yourself, what you desire that grace and comeliness for, and what use you desire to make of people's admiring you; according as that is better or worse, so will your dressing and adorning yourself be more or less innocent.

Some of the ancient Christians, as Tertullian and others, seem to allow wives a greater liberty in dressing than virgins, but they say it should be only where it is fairly probable, at least, that the affections of the husbands cannot otherwise be easily retained: but they at the same time reproach the folly and lightness of those men, who considered such appearances more than the true and only ornaments, the virtuous and good qualities of women; and they restrain the wives appearing handsomer than ordinary to the husbands only, which may indeed be done in the design, but not as to the effects, which will also have influence upon other people. Nevertheless, though there may be something of reason in satisfying some desires, yet there will be a great deal of imprudence and insecurity in it. Some husbands may be light, wanton and fantastical themselves, and their fancies prove but weak and simple guides; they may in vain dress for them, but dress for others to purpose: wherefore though they should be permitted to take a greater liberty with respect to their husbands and the pleasing them; yet because they live and converse with other people, they are prohibited; as well as other women, such dress as, notwithstanding



and naturally, according to the wicked inclinations and propensities of people, taken and laid hold on, it is to be looked upon as given. It is true indeed he is in fault, and shall be punished, that takes the bad occasion not designed to be given; but it is also true, that she is to be blamed, and shall be punished, that offered so proper and so easy a temptation.

These reflections are sufficient to alarm both sexes, and make them cautious of giving or taking temptations by dress, so common now-a-days, that there is no immodesty which fashion does not seem to justify; and the extravagance is so great, not so much as to the expence as to the mode, that in a little while the fair sex will have lost their distinguishing quality, shame, and that which of all charms is most winning, modesty. They have been so used to dress at pleasure, that they will hardly be brought to believe but they are left at intire liberty in it, and may wear what clothes they please, or even none at all, if it was the fashion.

Those of them who would neither abandon modesty, nor be confined by scruple, may consider, that if the garb be such as cannot easily and naturally tempt, then let the event be what it will, the party gave it not, and so it is innocent. In a word, to design a thing that is evil, is sin, though you do not effect it, because you have done all you could; to dress with a design to catch unwary and wicked hearts, is therefore a sin, whatever the effect be. To effect an evil end may be a sin, though you do not design it, because you take the proper and usual courses to effect it, and because the effect depends not on designs and purposes, but upon natural and proper means, and because you knew, or ought to know, that that was very likely to be the effect and consequence of such your actions.

The truth is, it is too obvious, that women of all conditions do not stand now to consider whether their manner of dress be lawful, but whether it is modish and taking; they are so far from not designing to please in their dress, that they have no notion of dressing to any other purpose.

It is to be hoped that this rule has a great many
 ons, and that there are many good women who
 be glad to be informed how far they may comply
 odes, and not injure their virtue. It is not easy
 mine what kind of dress does naturally, easily,
 ally produce bad effects, for modesty and shame
 many cases depend upon usages and customs of
 and the consent of such a people; and that which
 nted modesty in some countries, is lightly regard-
 other. The opinions of the same nation alter
 and circumstances, and a too hasty and unkind
 may pass on those occasions, unless things are
 y considered. However men and women are not
 such uncertainties, but they may, if they will,
 etty tolerably where the danger lies, and whence
 ptation rises; according to their knowledge,
 best of their guess, they are obliged to remove the
 of such temptation, or else they will offend
 the rules of scripture, which forbid Christian
 such dresses as serve to immodesty and loose-
 s also all such attire as takes up too much of their
 which is given to better purposes, as has been al-
 scribed on the head of employment. What ac-
 in those ladies give of it, that waste whole morn-
 the decorations of their head only, and leave
 of their dress to consume their afternoons? that
 s at their glass in adjusting themselves, and prac-
 the languishing looks they are to carry abroad
 em? that will not stir from it as long as there is
 ut of its place, and think a day well spent if they
 en well dressed in it? must not such set a higher
 the grace of their body, than on the beauty of
 d? and can they be said to be all that while work-
 their salvation? If they would reflect a little on
 at business so necessary to their eternal felicity,
 ch they have to do that is more considerable than
 y are about, and that too little expended in adorn-
 setting out themselves in much more tolerable and
 safe

safe than too much, they would want no great advice in these cases, nor much offend by such a negligence. They must needs determine for themselves in all these matters, and they may do it safely, on the better side, the rule being short and easy. It is unlawful to bestow that time in dressing one's self which is due to God and religion, which should be spent in his worship and service, and which is given on purpose to us to secure our everlasting interest with him; or that time we owe to our neighbours, our relations, or ourselves, in the several states of life, and in the different respects we have to them all. Though a woman may be constant in her prayer and reading, or what other spiritual exercises she may be upon, yet it is not enough if she employs those hours on adorning herself, that are due to the discharge of the office of a good wife, or parent, or the mistress of a family: for these are all of them duties, and must be paid, whereas the other might be better spared. It is not only an imprudent but a criminal neglect in any woman, to dedicate those hours to dress, which ought to be spent in looking after the concerns of her husband and family, her children and her servants; the end and business of her relation as a wife. Great ladies will not have patience to read so uncourtly a lecture. What! take them from their toilets to turn them into the kitchen or laundry? Have not they servants enough to look after the affairs of the family? And what have they to do in the nursery, but to play away a minute or two, which hangs on their hands, with their children? After this rate, they must be always in a dishabille, so ill-becoming every one that is not better dressed by nature. They cannot imagine the time ill-spent, that is innocently employed over a dressing-box; but when they see death at a nearer distance, and remember what little preparations they made for it, they will with horror look back on a life of pride, vanity and idleness, which generally are companions; and wish in vain, that they had made use of it in dressing out their souls for eternity.

As

As to costly array, mentioned by the apostle, we may reasonably presume he forbids such dress, as by its expense prevents some people from doing that good which they might otherwise have done, by charity in its several instances: not that all money expended on things pleasant and delightful is ill spent, or ought to have been bestowed on charitable uses: an opinion that has neither truth nor reason in it; for many things that are neither absolutely necessary, nor yet so strictly convenient, but at one may be well without them, are nevertheless very useful, and indifferent to be used or let alone as we see. Otherwise it would be unlawful to do almost anything in the world but alms: no one must purchase any thing, but what was of absolute necessity, because the superfluity might be better employed; and even of things of absolute necessity, no one must take the better when the worse would serve, because the surplussage of rice might serve to charitable uses; whereby the mind would be perpetually perplexed. Sometimes the innocent and lawful pleasures of this life are in a manner necessary to the sweetening of men's cares; but as in this, so it is in dress, the excess of it is only blameable, and the extremity to be avoided. That expence in it which disables people from laying out anything on good uses, is to be condemned; when a woman carries the fortune of a family about her, and almost labours under the weight and pressure of her ornaments; when she is really in pain herself, for the fantastic pleasure of thinking she is pleasing to another: this must needs be faulty, because it is choosing to do that, which is at least neither necessary, nor convenient, nor commanded, before that which is both excellent and necessary, as are acts of charity and kindness, in their several relations, and according to their several qualities and abilities. Since charity and doing good is the very end of God's bestowing riches upon people, and the pretence and ground of their deserving them; as also the best and truest use they can possibly make of them, they must surely be self-condemned

condemned that hinder themselves from putting riches to this good use, by laying them out so very extravagantly and unprofitably, to please a vitiated imagination, and attract the eyes of others: thus they, in some sense, defraud the poor and needy of the true and solid comforts of life, that sweep the ground with that, whose purchase would have fed the hungry, satisfied the thirsty, and comforted the hearts of the sick and imprisoned.

What shining examples have we of the primitive Christians, who parted with their costly apparel, ~~their~~ jewels and ornaments, to feed and clothe the needy servants of Christ! They are glorious ones, it is true; but are lights hung out, to shew men rather where they may go, than to direct them where they must. To imitate them in this is unquestionably very good, but yet not necessarily required of those that are not, nor those that are in the same circumstances; but they may serve to shew, that these excellent and charitable Christians would have thought it an unpardonable fault, to have bestowed any excessively superfluous cost upon themselves, when they thereby disabled themselves from imitating so many noble and human precepts in behalf of charity, as we find in scripture. Reason, as well as the divine command, forbids all such costliness of apparel, as exceeds the quality, and ability of the wearer. This error is one offence against decency, and that natural and becoming order, which the wisdom and custom of all times and places have agreed upon, as most convenient to discriminate the people one from another, to prevent disrespect, disorder and confusion. The power of dress is very great in commanding respect: a peer's robes strike a greater awe in the vulgar than his most pompous titles; and what would the grave and solemn decisions of the magistrate signify to most people, if they were not wrapped in fur and ermine? This distinction of garment has a more solid foundation, than to humour the pride of the judge, or the vanity of the peer: all nations agree in it; and we err
when

when we any way endeavour to confound it. Though excess in apparel is not an offence against God, barely considered, yet all kinds of luxury, and this especially of dress, in wise governments, has more or less been frequently restrained by penal laws; which would not have been done, had there been no inconvenience, and no kind of deformity and natural indecency in it. The inconvenience is most certainly the greatest that can happen to us, that occasions poverty and want; it exhausts the gain of honest traffic and labour: what should subsist the family, breed up the children, and support trade and credit, is trifled away in shew and gay appearance, not only to the shame, but to the ruin of the husband. The best a man can hope for from such a costly wife, is to be pitied, after he has a while been laughed at by the world. Husbands are discouraged in the prosecution of their business, when they see the fruits of their industry so lavishly, to fililly, and suddenly squandered away, by the light and wanton fancies of their wives: this frequently tempts them to a careless and desperate sort of management, which quickly ends in destruction: they first run into debt to support the vanity of their wives; and the best way they at last find to get out of it, is bankruptcy: they cannot pay all, and therefore will pay none: fools in contracting their debts, and knaves in the discharge of them. It is impossible for a woman to be a good wife, that does not suit her expences to her husband's circumstances: if she loved him, she would consult his ease more than her vanity; she would tremble to think on the torture he must endure, from the importunity of creditors, to support her luxury. No pretence of birth or quality is an excuse for this ruinous excess. Ladies are not to consider what they were born, but to what their children are born; nor when they pride it in their own quality forget their husbands: it is by his rank and his estate they are to govern themselves in these matters. They call their
mar-

marriage changing their condition, and should remember, among other senses of those words, that they change their own condition for that of their husbands, be it what it will, better or worse; they must suit their minds to it, and then the rest will follow as it should. Content is requisite to happiness in all stations, but most in a married one; and that wife who aspires to a figure above her husband's ability in dress, shews all the world she despises his condition, which must render her miserable; and no appearance she makes will raise the envy of the beholder; but on the contrary, move their contempt for a creature, that amidst so much misery can fancy herself happy. Pride is the occasion of this excessive costliness and gaiety of apparel; and she must have little reason to be proud of herself, who is so ashamed of her husband, as to despise his rank, and usurp a figure which does not belong to it. It is very possible, and, I question not, very frequent, for men and women to bear as good and humble minds under the richest attire, as under the poorest: when they go according to their state and quality, they do no more than is expected of them, and it is not taken so much notice of. Pride is generally fed by the admiration of others, and we are not apt to admire that great and rich people go fine; their quality and state are an excuse for their dressing at more expence than is necessary; but it is impossible for them to have humble and good minds, to exceed their quality and estates, without pride; which other women as well as wives ought to consider, for they are as guilty of this extravagance, and from the same motive, pride, which is a most damnable sin, and was undoubtedly forbidden in the very text we have before cited on the subject of dress. What makes us over-value ourselves, and under-value others, must be sinful in Christians; in whom meakness and modesty ought always to be conspicuous, from a consciousness of our own demerits. If we reflect, that Christ, the Saviour of the world, dyed
for

for the poorest man as well as for the rich; for the beggar in his rags, as well as for the prince in his purple; how can we set ourselves so much above our fellow sinners, only for a little difference in appearance, and that all accidental? For nature has made the beggar as beautiful as the prince, and if renouncing the helps of art, the poor woman should appeal to nature, how vainly would the rich lady have dressed out in gold and diamonds, if she laid by her beauty with her garments? For it is remarkable, that every thing extravagant in the conduct of life, misses even the purposes it intended.

Notwithstanding what has been said concerning errors in dress, we must not run away with mistakes, nor conclude all things unlawful, because some things are. To think there is merit in rejecting all gaiety and expence in apparel, is as dangerous as to lanch out into it. There are niceties and difficulties in the injunctions we have been treating of, which are well worth considering; for without such consideration, people will argue obstinately, and censure confidently and uncharitably.

That may be accounted pride and haughtiness, which is perhaps the natural air and mien of a person. A gentleman of good sense, and easiness of conversation, has the misfortune to have past all his life-time for a fop; and asserted, purely because by nature or ill custom, he has acquired such a gate, that he cannot turn his head without trouble to him, thence it is that he is reckoned stiff and proud; whereas his conversation, and manner of living with all his acquaintance, is the freest imaginable. There is a shiness also in several people, which is taken for contempt of others, and is a very diffidence of themselves; and there is also a delicacy and decency of both sexes, which is mistaken for pride: this in all ages has produced a set of slovenly Christians, who think it is not saint-like to be neat. The cloisters of popish countries

are very well furnished with them; because the inside of the cup is commanded to be kept clean, they are of opinion it is sinful to bestow any care on the outside. Some men of warm and corrupt imaginations may receive temptation from dresses, that are not naturally and designedly immodest: in such cases the sin is their own, and they are not to be avoided because they abuse them. Though to dress on certain occasions may take up more time than one can suppose should be allowed for it, and cause one to neglect a duty required of us: after-diligence may make it up, when such negligence is not a common practice. Accidents may happen which require costly habits, and may, for the present, hinder doing that good, for which compensation may be made for the future, every thing has its season; occasions may offer where it may be lawful and expedient for people to exceed themselves in habits, to forget their qualities and stations; which they may after as reasonably remember, and return in soberness and constancy again to themselves; for this reason we should not be over-scrupulous ourselves in these matters, nor hasty in censuring others. There are too many things to be considered to determine quickly: one may with much more ease acquit or condemn ones self than others in these particulars, because we know ourselves much better, and can frequently recover to our memory the principles we go upon, and in what they are firm, and in what they fail. A little understanding with a great deal of sincerity and good intentions, will be able to direct us sufficiently and safely in all these cases.

All our reflections on dress have hitherto turned on the negative, what it is the divine laws would not restrain us from: what follows will be more in the affirmative, and what it is we are positively enjoined: particularly, what ornaments all Christian women should adorn themselves with, the “hidden man of the
“heart

the ornaments of a meek and quiet spirit." To adorn the mind and lay not all their time and thoughts out in adorning the body; to fill it with Christian virtues, purity, humility, meekness, and modesty; to set the heart with all spiritual graces, make it as fine as a flower, and can with divine love. Its beauty consists in its simplicity, and though it is hidden to man in a great measure, it is known to the Omniscient, who takes delight in a pure heart, and prefers it to diamonds and rubies. The minds of Christian ladies should be filled with good principles; their hearts should be stored with good qualities as are truly ornamental, and make the person as lovely and desirable as any exterior adornment can do. This adorning is to be in "that which is not corruptible." Gold, pearls, and costly raiment, are but perishable things; things that consume and wear away in time; things that are prey to rust and moth, subject to thieves and accidents. Whatever serves the body, either as food or ornament, is, like its body, corruptible: but the mind, immaterial and immortal, requires and looks for ornaments suited and proper to it. Among which, the most considerable is a meek and quiet spirit, a good and temperate mind, a lowly and modest opinion of themselves, a mind content with their condition, which is of more value than the most costly apparel, being of great value in the sight of God, commanded and approved by him. This is the readiest way for Christian women to commend themselves to God, and to their husbands. A weak hold has that woman of her husband's heart that ties him only with a curl or a ribbon? But purity and innocence will not fail of keeping the husband, and they gain. All inward accomplishments are those which they depend not on caprice and humour. Passions and desires that cannot be restrained by duty, will not be kept by dress; their inclinations vary oftener in one mode, but the good qualities of the mind have a lasting and commanding as well as engaging influence; they

make husbands afraid of injuring so much goodness, and engage their affections by respect and esteem. The soul, as the better part of man, deserves the more of our care in adorning it: It is the guide to the body, it is its governor, and should be set out to the best advantage: the soul renders him a reasonable and religious creature; the greatest privilege and honour he is capable of enjoying: and it is equally foolish and sinful to neglect it, whose being is eternal; and be more solicitous for the body, whose being is transient and uncertain. When we dress the mind out, we dress for eternity; when we decorate the body, it is but for a few moments only. How invaluable then is our spiritual clothing in comparison with our temporal? How much more pains should we take in cultivating and improving the mind, when we once are convinced of the necessity of doing it? We shall want no motives to it, no arguments against the vanity and sin of spending our riches and time in outward ornaments, for the neglecting the soul to adorn the body, as if a man should be at great expence to build the walls and outside of his house very fine and stately, and shew no manner of contrivance in the inside of it; regarding neither beauty nor convenience, nor intending any furniture. This would be building for the sight and pleasure of people passing by, and wanting in the mean time an habitation for himself; every one would cry out such a man is either a fool or a madman, neglecting that which is most properly the house, and ought to be the most serviceable and convenient, for the sake of appearing well to strangers, without any farther use. They are as foolish and blame-worthy, who labour to adorn their bodies, while the mind lies waste and wild; what hopes can they have to gain admiration? The mind is the principle of life and motion, and is to give true grace and ornament to all their actions. How shocking does a body look with all the advantages of dress, when
the

the soul is uncultivated and unimproved? Nay, beauty itself, though much more amiable and charming than dress, receives a good part of its graces from the mind. Let a body be framed ever so fine and handsome by nature, if the mind be weak or silly, the first motive shews it, and as soon as it is seen, it is so far from being admired, that a fine statue pleases as much, or rather more; for a fine statue pleases always, a fine foolish woman no longer than she is like a statue, dumb; when she speaks she turns to an awkward irregular figure, and loses her comeliness immediately. This proves from whence that beauty of all exterior gesture and action proceeds from the mind, which being in itself accomplished inwardly, so governs and directs the outward carriage and behaviour of the body, as to make it handsome and becoming. This reflection should, methinks, be sufficient of itself to put all such as desire favour and acceptance, upon cultivating and improving the mind, which would heighten all the advantages of the body, and brighten their very beauty. It would better answer the ends they propose to themselves by dress, than any other ornaments, how modest, how costly soever. The heart of man is of itself invisible, so is God who acts all; there is nothing discovers itself sooner than the heart, as hidden as it is, wherefore no pains should be thought too much to let it appear well. As it is the mighty spring that communicates life and motion to all the rest, so it is the source of all beautiful and graceful actions, and as it is pure or impure, the streams that flow from it will partake of its corruptions or cleanness. How to improve the mind has been spoken of already; every thing that drives levity and vanity from it, helps to its improvement; every thing that fills it with them, adds to its corruption, and should be avoided. People come to obtain good qualities of the mind, as they come by several habits of the body, by use and custom. Those that delight in reading, in praying and meditation, will take no more delight in

dress than serves to keep them from giving offence. They will find enough in the heart not to make them in love with themselves; and then they will not be so apt to flatter themselves, that others will be in love with them; nor labour much to effect it. They will be more desirous of the esteem of wise and good men, and that they know is not to be obtained by shew and expence. A sure way to drive such vain thoughts out of their heads, is to use themselves to think of the dignity of their being, of the duties they were born to perform, and their capacity to perform them; they will perceive they have powers and faculties different from, and superior to, those of other creatures; that they can call to mind things past, can consider things present, and compare them with one another, know their difference, and determine what to do in time to come; they can inquire into their own original, and find their species has not been from all eternity, but was in time created by a being existing necessarily itself, and voluntarily producing all things else. They find this powerful Being has created them with so many wants, that they must needs depend upon him for supply, which brings them by necessity to worship him by prayer; yet has he crowned them with so many blessings, and good things, that natural gratitude excites them to return him praise. This will unavoidably make them religious; religion will as unavoidably make them despise the pomps and vanities of this frail life; and when once their hopes are in heaven, they will not disturb their pious and pleasant meditations with cares of rich and gay apparel: they see evidently God made them for more sublime offices, that he has given them abilities and powers to worship and serve him, and they will not spend their lives in serving themselves, their pride and pleasure. Such reflexions as these will induce them to strive with all their might to obtain that purity of heart, which is so lovely in the eyes of God and man; and in
this

this labour will the good employ all that time which the light and vain consume on dress; they will be convinced that it is the most just and reasonable thing in the world, that God who has been so beneficent and good to them as to make them what they are, and to give them what they have, and is so powerful as to supply them with what they ask and want, should be worshipped, honoured, and revered; and finding that no part of the creation is capable, besides mankind, of paying him this worship, and religious honour and service, they cannot help concluding that it lies on them to do it, and that it is one, and a mighty end of their creation.

It is probable worldly minds will not be delighted with these speculations, they would rather have matter to feed than to correct their vanity; they want novelty even in lessons that are intended to give a check to their impatience after it: and these serious considerations will not be so agreeable to them as instructions which are gay and galant, designed to form their manners for this world more than for the next. But my intentions being to endeavour, as much as in me lies, after a reformation in morals, only to prepare their minds for that grace which is eternal; I cannot out of complacency to the weaknesses of nature humour them in their follies, nor instruct any other way than as I am myself guided, by the Scriptures, and the good doctrine of those that preach them. By using ourselves to contemplate our creation, and the creation of all the wonderful works that we behold around us, our souls will be filled with the knowledge and belief of God, and convinced of the duty of adoring him. We see so much beauty and excellency in every thing he has created, that we must have a contempt for whatever is not immediately of the hand of the great Author of nature. Such thoughts will lead us to the study and practice of virtue, which will render us more agreeable to ourselves and the world, than the sopperies of air or dress, by which fools endeavour to

get distinction. Without virtue there can be no religion, it is the foundation of it: and when we consider God in all his excellencies, we find him in himself eternal and omnipotent, all-wise, and pure and holy; with respect to us, as all his creatures, just and righteous, merciful and good: these are the adorable perfections we find in this most perfect Being; and thence we may conclude, that the nearer we approach to these perfections, the more perfect creatures we ourselves are, and the more loved and valued by the Creator. This will naturally make us in love with those virtues which lead us to that degree of perfection to which we aspire: it will raise in us a desire of being as excellent as our nature is capable of, and rendering ourselves most acceptable to God, the rewarder of such as endeavour to be like him. This will excite us to be pure, holy, chaste, and clean, to preserve ourselves spotless and undefiled, because we know this sanctity and innocence are a great perfection to our nature, and maintain the dignity of it; whereas pollution and impurity degrade and sink us below ourselves, setting us on a level with the beasts that are void of understanding. We know likewise this virtue is altogether heavenly, and of the sweetest odour before God; that it will be recompensed by him with the most pure and undisturbed pleasure in heaven, the seat of holiness. This will instigate us to be just and righteous to one another in all our dealings, as our God is righteous and just; and to manage ourselves with that fairness, that humanity in all things, that we never reproach our own consciences with having done to others what we would not have had them do to us. We must not set up our private will and humour instead of the everlasting rule of righteousness, nor study our convenience and pleasure only, without having any regard to the convenience and pleasure of others.

There is indeed nothing more natural, than that every one should consult his own benefit and ease in the first place; but because what belongs to every one is really no
privilege

age to any one, every one must depart from his neighbourhood in some cases, and submit to rules that are equitable and impartial, and favour all the world.

The best rule of reason and religion is, "to do as would be done by:" no body can escape seeing the ableness of this rule, and the necessity of observing the security of our being, and all we possess: the more we keep to it, the better and more perfect we are ourselves, and the more useful to others. It gives us eminence above all that neglect it, and as it likens God himself, so nothing will render us more acceptable to him than righteousness and justice. These notions will banish from our minds all base and selfish notions, they will enlarge our souls, and make us free from those narrow and ungenerous actions, which are all in ourselves, with disdain. This rectitude of mind which is of the divine essence, will keep us from wronging and injuring others; and if we give no offence it is the surest way to prevent receiving any. It is hardly a Christian virtue which has not its reward in this life, and did our works end with us, it would be both for our interest and pleasure that they should be good. How sweet is that benignity of mind which excites to charity? Pity is an excellence, and great ornament of our nature, and the doing good to those who are in need of our assistance; to pardon affronts and injuries, "to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to visit the sick and imprisoned, to comfort the distressed, to protect the weak and innocent, to right the wronged and oppressed," naturally gives men an undisputed power and superiority. The benevolent will be always uppermost in the praise, honour, and esteem of all that see and know, as well as of all who feel his goodness. These considerations are however mean in comparison of that which ought to be the strongest motive for doing good; that by so doing we may please our heavenly Father, the Giver of all things, who bestows his favours and blessings on

men with this design, that they should also favour and be kind to one another, and be themselves a blessing to their generation. What promises of reward have we from him, if we prefer the being like to him, and doing all the good we can, to any little private interest and advantage of our own?

These reflexions on virtue are far from being a digression from our subject. If we can establish this of goodness in the minds of men; if we can bring them to be in love with acts of charity, we shall easily persuade them not to be so fond of themselves as to forget others; not to lay out their whole souls in studying how to decorate their persons, and neglect the pleasant duties of mercy and kindness: when the mind is well furnished and adorned, it will have a contempt for the ornaments of the body; and next to religion and virtue, wisdom and discretion are the most amiable and desirable graces of the soul.

By discretion and wisdom is to be understood, not only the knowledge of virtue and religion, which are always implied in them, but also an ability of behaving ones self prudently and decently on all occasions towards all people. It is possible to be both righteous and virtuous without discretion; but neither virtue nor religion are credited or promoted by those that are so: they are good to themselves, but their good is not at all edifying, but rather hurtful: the extravagance of their zeal, the indiscreet management of their devotion, the indecency of their unusual way and gesture, are so far from inviting to religion, that they rather excite pity in the wise and good, and scorn in the light and profane; whereas a sober, unaffected, and discreet deportment, both of mien and voice, in the public worship of God, is not only handsome and becoming in itself, but does insensibly provoke the zeal of others: this discreet and sober deportment is inconsistent with gaudy and wanton dress. How ridiculous is it to see a lady bare to her breasts, affecting
an

an air of devotion, and snatching the affectionate glances of her eyes, from her lover or galant, to turn them up to heaven? If we examined curiously the looks and behaviour of such as attend divine worship, what cause shall we have to lament the decay of true Christian piety? We shall find some so far over-acting their parts, that we have reason to think they are like the hired mourners of ancient and modern times, who, though they wept most at funerals, were still the persons that were least afflicted: others on the contrary, carry themselves with so much negligence, that one sees plainly, their worship is much a fashion with them as their dress: the bows, the cringes, the laughs, the sneers, all at the same time that they pray to God to be in the midst of them, and profess to be adoring the Almighty in his immediate most holy presence, has something so wicked and so dreadful in it, that it is amazing that Christians should not better know what is decency, and what is duty; I question whether the Pagan temples were ever defiled with so much levity. And this error, as scandalous, and crying as it is, is grown so common, that if there is no other restraint put upon it than the fear of eternal punishment, it is to be feared that example will still prevail over precept.

Many are the virtues which lose much of their power and efficacy, for want of prudent and discreet conduct. Justice may cease to be respected, when one sees a criminal barbarously treated by either judge or counsel, or condemned with unseasonable sarcasm, and in a vein of lightness, though his sentence and punishment are just. Justice thus administered, will have quite other effects on the minds of the spectators, than it would if they saw such gravity, such calmness, and becoming evenness of temper, as would shew neither displeasure at the offender's person, or unconcernedness at his offence, but a due mixture of zeal for the security of laws and government, and of humanity and pity for the

the miserable. It is the business of discretion to attain ones end, by means not only just and righteous in themselves, but also well-approved of, and best liked by others, to do what should and must be done, but in the most decent and most acceptable manner.

Clemency and lenity may be so indiscreetly exercised to some delinquents, with respect to the manner, and so unseasonably, with respect to time and opportunity, that it shall rather seem a disregard to justice, than an effect of mercy and compassion. Though nature strongly inclines to pity, yet when it is not exercised on a proper object, it misses its effects upon mens minds, and is neither approved nor praised. The partial distribution of justice being downright sin, and its punishment damnation, it is not to be reckoned among indiscreet, but among wicked acts. When what is merit at one time shall be criminal at another; when offences against certain persons are taken severe cognisance of, and against others encouraged and rewarded; when for the interests or passions of men in power, men out of it are persecuted and oppressed; this is a crime of the blackest die, and there can be no virtue dwelling in minds that are capable of it: no ornament will become such souls, no splendor render their persons amiable, no dignity obtain them reverence, their cunning is so far from being discreet or prudent, that it is of the same kind, and will have the same end, with hypocrisy and deceit.

If discretion gives so great advantage to religion and virtue, which can bear themselves out without it, it is certainly necessary in matters of less moment: it adorns and guides conversation, it gives grace to all we say or do, and is to be neglected in nothing: it is hard to tell how it is to be acquired; yet the want of it is sensibly to be discerned, and appears in all the follies and absurdities that people commit. It is a dexterity and ability of behaving ones self prudently and decently, and so very useful and graceful, that it ought

ought to be one of our principal studies; every one being the better for it themselves, and the more serviceable to others. It is perhaps designed to us in part by the wise Solomon, when he tells us, "There is to every thing a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven; a time to break down, and a time to build up; a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, a time to cast away; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak." That is, there is a season and time so proper and convenient for all purposes, that they who observe it not, will infallibly fall into great absurdities, and commit a world of errors and indecencies. On the contrary, they who do observe these proper times, shall shew themselves to be wise and considerate, effect their purposes much better, and live in more esteem. Regard to time is undoubtedly a necessary part of discretion; but to that must also be joined, a due regard to age and place, person and quality, both with respect to ourselves and others, which reduces the general rule of discretion to the article of dress, and has been already enlarged upon. But we do not confine ourselves to it; it being of so absolute necessity in all the parts of life, it would be absurd to neglect it for the sake of one; and wherever we introduce our reflections on any virtue or vice, it cannot be impertinent, if it tends to improvement.

The more general and extensive our consideration and observation of these things are, the likelier is our conduct to be prudent and discreet; the less offence shall we give, and be guilty of the fewer absurdities; the more decent, the more useful will our conversation and behaviour be. I have insisted the more on this, because it is probable, that more domestick evils arise from want of discretion, than want of either virtue or religion; and therefore in shewing how the mind was to be adorned, I could not avoid adding wisdom and discretion to religion and virtue: for since the precept enjoins, that Christian women should be good wives,

s well as virtuous and religious, and it is their duty to be one as well as the other; it must needs be necessary for them to provide such qualities, as are requisite to the discharging the duty next to religion and virtue: wherefore since without a competent share of prudence and discretion, it is not possible to be either good wives or good mothers, or good mistresses of families, it is to be no little part of their concern to get as much of discretion and prudence as they can: and when they are furnished with these excellent qualities, they will want no lessons against vanity of behaviour or dress; they will make decency their rule in both, and never fall into extravagance or impertinence.

There remains still to consider, that the ornaments of the mind enjoined by the apostle, are to "be in that which is not corruptible." Whatever we can possibly adorn the body with is corruptible, and wears away with time; all the beauty and comeliness it gives is short and perishing. Sometimes it happens, that these costly ornaments and gay attire, are so far from adding any beauty and grace to the parties, that they are rather to their disadvantage, expose them to derision, and deceive none but themselves. But granting they obtain their end, and render them as lovely as they would appear, how long does such a vain delusion last, and what is the use of being so pleased? How many various accidents, how many cruel diseases, in a little time, quite destroy this creature of the fancy? If it escape these hazards, how strangely does a few years disguise the fairest face? One cannot too often put the fair in mind of the folly of priding themselves in glories which, like that of the lily, so soon fade and die away. So useless, so fantastic, so transient a thing as beauty, cannot be worth the care, and pains, and cost that people are at about it. The praise and pleasure of it while it lasts is inconsiderable and empty, and when it is gone, as it is quickly gone, it leaves either shame or grief, or both, to such as have over-rated it while they had it, and valued themselves upon

upon that weak account; they are punished in some proportion to the vain esteem they held themselves in.

But the mind, when that is cultivated and improved, answers sufficiently for all the care, and time, and pains, that are bestowed upon it. The ornaments of that are such, as always obtain the end proposed by them: they always represent it beautiful and lovely to all people: it does not depend upon the humour or fancy, whether religion, virtue, and discretion, shall find favour and acceptance, for they will always find their force irresistible; while men have reason and understanding, they cannot help approving and desiring these accomplishments of the soul: we may in this case trust them with their passions; for though their own practice be against them, guided by their inordinate desires, yet is their secret judgment always on the side of religion, virtue, and discretion; and they always like them in others, how much soever they neglect them in themselves. The loosest people in the world, would have their mothers, their wives, their daughters, their sisters, and all their relations, religious, virtuous and discreet, rather than beautiful; and therefore it is the settled judgment of mankind, that these are the best, the truest, and most lasting ornaments of women. Indeed when beauty also meets and joins with these excellent qualities, they give a natural lustre to each other, and set each other off to great advantage: beauty adds grace to them, and they present the greatest beauty yet more beautiful. But these are ornaments when this is gone, and where it never was; these are incorruptible, and last as long as the mind itself, which they adorn and beautify; these are of great use and service; these deserve the greatest praise and honour, and these will stand them in stead when all things else fail them. All beauty and external ornaments are of very little use and service, either to such as have them, or to such as behold them; whereas religion, virtue, and discretion, are of general use and benefit; they are serviceable to every one: they do not
only

only make those who possess them good, but they make them do good to all that are concerned, or have to deal with them. Beauty, wit, birth, quality, and fine attire attract the eyes and admiration; but it is another sort of admiration; which is raised by virtue and religion; it is always attended, with esteem and secret veneration, the other with envy, or perhaps contempt; for if men see we are too vain, and puffed up with conceit for either beauty, wit, birth, quality, or fine attire, they will refuse us the superiority we would usurp, and look with disdain on what we expect they should admire. The admiration raised by those outward qualities as excellent as they are in themselves, is only a transient wonder; something that glisters and dazzles the eyes; a fine sight, which works on the fancy a little, and then gives way to other novelties, that still occasions the same wonder: but the admiration raised by the true ornaments of the mind, religion, virtue and discretion, is from the contemplation of some great and noble work of nature, which by its beauty and its usefulness begets esteem and liking in the mind immediately; a liking and esteem that continues there, and are excited as often as the object or idea of it rises or appears. There is therefore no comparison between the usefulness of beauty and the ornaments of the body, and those good qualities and graces that are the ornaments and beauties of the soul. Nor is there any comparison between the praises, honour and esteem, that all good, wise, and sober people give, and have, for virtuous and religious women; and that short gaze and compliment which vain and idle spirits pay to beauty and gay clothes. "Favour, says one that knew, is deceitful, and beauty is vain, but a woman that feareth the lord she shall be praised." Favour and beauty have their praise, vain and deceitful as they are, bestowed with the mischievous purpose of ensnaring and corrupting: but they who fear the lord in wisdom and virtue, are praised in earnest, and honoured and esteemed with all sincerity.

There

there can be no difficulty, therefore in the choice of these different ornaments and beauties; the one are vain and uselefs, the other solid and serviceable; the former are beloved and had in veneration by all good people, the latter valued for a time by the young and giddy; the former will stand those that have them in stead, when the latter fail them and are gone. The favour and affection which are only built upon good features, countenance, shape, dress, and ornament, must necessarily decay and die. This affection depends upon diseases, accidents and humour for its being. Can this be sufficient to secure the peace and happiness of married persons, who have it not in their power to secure themselves against diseases, accidents and change of humour? If their happiness consisted in such affection, precarious, dependent, and uncertain would it be? If it is, they cannot be happy without affection and good-will, which are necessary to make them easy and contented as long as they live, much longer than they can hold their beauty and their comeliness. They are obliged then in common prudence, to secure the affections of their husbands, by adorning themselves with those good qualities, that will render them more acceptable to wise and sober men, even when the charms of their beauty are defaced. These qualities are modesty, piety, virtue, and discretion; where-ever they appear there will be no want of any thing else, or if there is a want these will excuse it or supply it. Where men discern a sound sense of religion, prevailing in their minds, influencing them to the exercise of all the virtues which are proper to them, according to their opportunities and abilities; where they see them manage their affairs with care, wisdom, and discretion, and discharge the duties of every relation, whether mother, wife, or mistress of a family, with diligence and prudence, they will not be captivated by the entertainments of a light and idle imagination; they will see no want of beauty in the body, where the soul shines out with so much lustre; the accomplishments

plishments of the mind will so charm them, that they will be blind to all other imperfections; they will find the use and pleasure of the excellent qualities of the soul in every action of their lives; it will be a comfort to them in their affliction, and a joy in prosperity, it will give grace and comeliness throughout, hide every native blemish, and what is infinitely more than rendering them amiable in the eyes of men, it will give them grace and favour in the sight of God, which is to be their principal aim. For what would it avail them to be amiable to all the world, if under God's displeasure? To be in favour with God is the surest way to be in favour with man: good-will is one of the blessings he showers down on his favourites, and there is no means of obtaining that felicity but by religion and virtue.

One would think by the conduct of the modish ladies, that they flattered themselves with a belief of being what the folly of fond men call them, goddesses, and their being and beauty immortal, that sickness and death durst not approach them; but the time will come, and perhaps shortly too, when they who have mis-spent their life in these or other idle and unprofitable exercises, though not directly sinful, when they have neglected to improve their better part, to dress up and adorn their souls, to clothe themselves with virtues and good works, shall see their crime, and how naked and defenceless they shall stand before the throne of God, where they are to give an account how they have passed their lives in this world: they who have been virtuous and holy, constant and fervent in their prayers and praises, frequent in reading of the scriptures and other good books, in meditating on the promises and threats they find in them, and who have all along been careful to be rich in good works, busied in the exercise of virtue, and constantly doing the several duties of their life, shall find the advantage of having thus improved their time, their talents, and abilities; they shall see that this was "trimming of their lamps," and
living

living in a readiness and expectation of the bridegroom's calling them ; that this was the adorning " of the " hidden man of the heart, which was not corruptible," and is in " the sight of God of great price."

If a Christian woman would demand of her own conscience, when she is consuming hours at her glass, and contriving how to prepare herself for the unchaste glances of wanton spectators: is this the trimming which the wise virgins adorn themselves with? Should I meet the heavenly bridegroom in these garments, so disposed to tempt and to be tempted, should I not be condemned with the foolish virgins? And what is that condemnation, but eternal torment? She would surely shorten the time she set apart for vanity, and give more to the adorning her soul with ornaments of religion and virtue, and especially with that of a " meek and quiet spirit," which the apostle tells is most becoming and precious " in the sight of God." By this " meek and quiet spirit," is to be understood a soft and gentle temper, a peaceful calm, and patient mind, opposed to anger, pride, and fierceness, noisiness, impatience, and a restless discontent. This kind of temper is the greatest happiness that can befall any one, making them easy to themselves, and to all about them. Most of the troubles and misfortunes of life are more or less uneasy and afflicting, as their minds are more or less prepared to entertain them. Thus we see the same evil that oppresses and overwhelms one man, makes very little impressions upon another; one man grows loud and passionate on the least occasion, a look of slight, a doubtful or an angry word sets him immediately in a flame, while another bears the most apparent insults, and heaviest injuries, with great evenness and patience; one man is calm and easy under great losses, while another storms and rages at little disappointments. A meek and quiet spirit therefore, does most evidently give the advantage to such as have it, and deliver them from many sufferings, to which the fierce and angry,

hally

hoſty and impatient, are ſubject. This renders it moſt deſirable temper that can be, in a life that ſcene of ſo much certain miſery and trouble.

The beſt qualities of the mind are depraved and ruptured by cuſtom and faſhion. Vapours and ſ are now affected as much as gaiety and wit. I are afraid of being thought fools if they are good-tured, and fancy they are never ſo witty as when are ſplenetic, and out of humour with every and every body about them; they ſeem to ſtudy ſcriptures, to act quite contrary to the rules of t Inſtead of the hidden ornaments of the heart, all thought and care is to ſet themſelves off with the ward ornaments of the body; inſtead of a meek quiet ſpirit, they are for a peeviſh and froward There is no greater ſign that modes are of the D invention, than that they are generally oppoſite to laws of God, and that almoſt all faſhions have a dency to evil, whether in dreſs or manners.

It may be objected that a meek and quiet ſpi not a thing to be acquired, but the gift of God, and we bring into the world with us, if we have it a How then can we be exhorted to get it, ſince it is to be got by us, but to be born with us? Every allows it to be very deſirable, if nature had been gracious to him as to make it a part of their being muſt be acknowledged that the ſeeds and principles all our paſſions and humours are born with us, there is generally a predominancy of ſome one hum that from our infancy bears ſway above the reſt, ſhews itſelf conſpicuouſly, and peculiarly makes o man ſo tempered. It is alſo ſure, that this mechanical propenſity of nature is not by any care or pains any art or diligence, to be quite extinguished, or tirely changed in education; there will be always a to that ſide, as all men feel; but it is as ſure that and pains, art, diligence and time, cuſtom and conſideration will go a very great way to the ch

and correcting any temper. Use, we say with reason enough, is a second nature, and we see people habituating themselves do almost become what they are; wherefore though they have it not in their power to change their tempers intirely, yet they always have in their power to change them as far as they are required to do it, as far as he enables them by reason and use to prevent all the mischievous effects that flow from them; not to indulge themselves in frowardness, viciousness, or fly out into passion and rage, but always to have a guard on their spirit, to keep it quiet, that it may be in "the sight of God of great price." Men and women are not required to put off their natural temper, and put on a new one presently, but so to govern themselves as to be quiet and meek on all occasions; to restrain themselves by reason and confirmation from falling into bitterness, impatience, mutiny, and clamour, not to take delight in teizing and teasing one another, nor study to find out trivial occasions of quarrel; not to chide their servants for faults, and to shew their authority, but to be calm in all things, and easy to all.

Many are the cross perverse accidents which will open in the course of their lives, many disappointments, many provocations will they meet with, severe trials must they go through, and if they do not arm themselves against them, with a patient and prudent spirit, their sufferings will be almost double on their heads. Now they are not called upon to be insensible and stupid under what befalls them, but so to prepare and behave themselves, that they may do nothing which mis-becomes them, in which they are to exercise their reason and best abilities. These are the tests of their obedience, patience and discretion. The doctrine of obedience is not easily to be taught, such as have been flattered with the foolish adoration of those, to whom when they marry they vow it: men seem to look upon it as words of form, and not

not as taken out of the Scripture to be put into the service of matrimony: some openly disown it, others refuse to practise it; many look upon it as usurpation, and many more treat it as a jest, few there are that regard it as a command, the breach of which is a sin, and the punishment of all sin, death eternal. No wonder those that will not obey their husbands, are so impatient under the least disobedience or negligence of servants and children, that they are never easy but when they are exerting their superiority; but they would do well to consider, that matters are seldom mended with them, by all the noise and contention that is raised; they are often made worse, but seldom better, neither the folly nor perverseness of men are cured, nor any unlucky accidents remedied, by impatience and fury. Things which of themselves would have done but little hurt, do, by indiscreet and hasty management, become the occasions of great mischief. Sometimes for a small inconsiderable matter they fall into such excess of anger and disorder, that they hazard by it all the peace and quiet of their lives, even the affection of their husbands, of which they ought to be most tender, knowing their happiness must end when this is alienated from them. The mischiefs that have been occasioned by the perverseness and petulancy of some wives are inconceivable; it has run some husbands on excess of drinking, to drive, as they call it, their cares away. Foolish men! their cares return with double bitterness, and the potion, though never so often repeated, no longer cures than it drowns them. Other husbands are put upon seeking in other women that good-nature which they cannot find in their wives, and by a criminal passion destroy a vexatious one: some grow to fury, and lose the respect and tenderness due to the sex: others despise the folly of those wives that cannot be quiet themselves, and therefore will let nobody else be quiet near them; they mind not their ill-humours, and by their contempt a-

D I L E S S.

men, for nothing finds it more than a heart
set. How often have women wept with
their husbands would not be angry with
this terragant first becoming distressed
and quietness "and your own God's light"
this turbulent and furious one to, for
evil things which the Lord allows, and which
only punish to all men!

considered these things is empty, and to show
us, let us from their considerations proceed to
be "direct as in leading a devout life."

all vain complacency in looking to per-
fect excellence, and curbing, if you
fact vain thoughts stealing upon you, not
to praise, that God has given you talents, but
may not be an occasion of sin in pride.

If you are left beautiful, be very much
take care to secure a happy conversation, and
be perfect in body and mind. Let your
your affections, with love, devotion, and
to the glory of God, and converse with
religious men.

serve a devout frugality, the temperance
of charity. Let your conversation be
following no false notions, and

never let your God, nor of other things
to actual intention of others, and

be understood to be sufficient, and
it is a sin, and not a sin, and not a sin,
his gift, and of other things, and not a sin,
direct to a spiritual life.

no more things, and not a sin, and not a sin,
very willing to be perfect, and not a sin,
which, your conversation, and not a sin,
and not a sin.

and not a sin, and not a sin, and not a sin,
and not a sin, and not a sin, and not a sin,
and not a sin, and not a sin, and not a sin,

Dives, we read, was clothed in purple, and yet Lazarus was not relieved; and needless excess devoured the supply of his real wants, leaving no ability perhaps to do it, had he been willing.

∴ We do not find that Dorcas's garments are mentioned, but the widows.

Give no more time to dress than to the service of God.

A P R A Y E R.

“ **O** My God, give me grace not to consume that on vain
 “ superfluities, which is due to the necessities of thy
 “ creatures: Let me not stop at justice: give me grace to
 “ be charitable, and to substract something from my own
 “ lawful portion, out of love to thee and my neighbour, that
 “ so I may in some measure supply their wants, and cause
 “ many thanksgivings unto thee, through Jesus Christ.
 “ Amen.”

Left some over-scrupulous people should be apt, from what has been said, to raise vain terrors to themselves concerning apparel, it is convenient to remove them, as well as to prevent the falling into the contrary extremity.

We are not to conclude that all rich and gay attire is alike forbidden to all ages and qualities, for Christ himself tells us, “those who are in king's houses are cloth-
 “ ed in soft raiment.” Reason seems to allow a disparity in dress, as God allows a difference in possessions; nevertheless the command against extravagance and wantonness in it, should be more regarded than it generally is. Instead of using these outward ornaments with sobriety, how many bestow that time in clothing the body which they owe to the adorning of the mind? and that money on vain superfluities, which is due not only to the necessities of the miserable, but to the support of their family and children? The mistress of the house often shines in her gold and pearl, while her children and family are in want and raggs;
 and

and the master is forced to lay out those sums in watches, necklaces, brocades, and the like, which ought to be paid to his impatient creditors. Not only time is wasted, and wealth consumed, but the mind is filled with fantastic images, by which the devotions and conversations of women are infected. Such sollicitousness about dress is more suitable to those unhappy and wretched women whose beauty is set to sale, than to those who make profession of religion, whose end in clothing should be cleanness and decency: if married, the pleasing their husbands, joined with a due regard to their age and degree. But those who adorn themselves to attract the eyes and admiration of the unwary, lay snares for themselves as well as others, and it is just if they fall into them. Such shall be answerable not only for their own sins, but for all that they willingly occasion in others.

A P R A Y E R.

“ **O** My God, since thou hast been pleased to keep me
 “ from deformity, let not the Devil pollute my heart
 “ and make me all rottenness within. Keep my mind pure,
 “ that evil thoughts may never lodge within me; that I
 “ may find a loathing, not a complacency, in all unclean
 “ imaginations or filthy communications; much more in
 “ all sinful and unhallowed actions. What greater glory
 “ can I desire from my outward comeliness, than to be a tem-
 “ ple for thy holy Spirit? Had I yet a more curious case,
 “ it would be too mean for so bright a jewel as a soul sanc-
 “ tified by grace. I desire no other triumphs, than to be
 “ thy servant; and if such outward advantages may make
 “ my religion appear better, and bring greater glory to
 “ my Maker, I rejoice in it. But, lord, I pray thee, never
 “ let my outward comeliness be a snare or cause of sin to
 “ myself or others.” Amen.

The king's daughter was all beautiful within: if I want outward beauty I only want what is often a temptation; and if I am contented with this defect, I practise an act of virtue which the more beautiful cannot.

“ Submit, O my soul, to this amusement, as a punishment of sin: for sin was the great deformity that introduced all others into the world. At the resurrection, if thou risest in grace, all these bodily deformities, the marks of sin, shall be done away, and the most pure and perfect soul have the most bright and glorified body.”

Much have we to do, much to learn, and no time to lose; do not therefore spend so precious a treasure on so poor an improvement as adorning the outward man, and neglecting the hidden man of the heart. Redeem what you can to improve your mind, or to other necessary duties; so shall you suppress vain complacencies, and a needless delicacy. Remember it is a sin and shame to give hours to dress, and to think half a one long in prayer.

In considering this subject, it is probable some of these considerations may have been urged more than once: and the evil is come to such a height, that a reformation cannot be too much pressed; nor the duties of avoiding vanity, and improving time, be too much insisted upon. What says, Wisdom itself?

“ I beheld among the simple ones a young man void of understanding; and behold there met him a woman with the attire of an harlot, and subtle of heart.”

How it is that wicked women adorn themselves, we read in the story of Jezebel, who hearing “ Jehu was come to Jezreel, painted her face, and tired her head.” Dinah was beautiful, and what evil did her beauty occasion? How was David ensnared by the beauty of Bathsheba? That man after God’s own heart, was so far bewitched by it, as to run at once into the damnable sins of murder and adultery. How often has the beautiful mask gilded the otherwise deformed vice of impurity? Learn that quiet and meek spirit, that modesty and humility in all your actions, and especially in your dress, which becomes the religion you profess: “ after this manner, says the apostle, in the old time, the holy women also who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection to their own husbands.”



C H A S T I T Y.

OF all the Christian virtues, there is none that shews the dignity and power of the soul so much as chastity: it is a triumph over a desire which nature has imprinted in the heart of man, fierce and unruly, full of false hopes and imaginary delights, which too often blinds the understanding, and leads to destruction. Chastity suppresses whatever is unlawful in this passion; and all desire is unlawful, which is not warranted by marriage, which is not within the order of nature, and the moderation of Christian modesty.

This is a very tender subject, and is hardly to be touched upon without giving offence. Fornication is of late softened by the gentle name of gallantry. The whoremonger, whom God will judge and condemn, is now the gallant man; and the adulterer, whose portion shall be in the lake that burns with eternal fire, glories in his adulteries, as if they were not so many triumphs over innocence and virtue. The hidden sins of both sexes are not fit to be exposed to light: they are too well known, and too commonly practised, to need any explanation: but let all voluntary polluters of themselves know that they must be judged for those their secret pollutions, by a judge who tries the heart, and whose all-searching eye nothing can escape. Thanks be to God, as wicked as we are, there are sins of this kind which are unknown to us, or if known, held in detestation. All unnatural lusts are abhorred, and incestuous enjoyments seldom or never heard of. It is the infinite mercy of God that keeps us, by his restraining grace, from these detested and damnable crimes:

wou'd the same infinite mercy purify our hearts as he is pure, and cleanse them of all lust, we should have equal abhorrence for all impurity, and excuse none on account of the degree of it.

The immoderate use, even of lawful love, is one of those irregular desires which is suppressed by chastity. The same judgment is to be made in this, as concerning meats and drinks, there being no certain degree prescribed to all persons, but it is to be ruled, as the other actions of men, by proportion to the end. Let us in all of them have in remembrance, that we should in every thing have the glory of God in view, and we shall never abuse the liberty of the nuptial bed, nor turn a chaste passion into lust. "For this is the will of God, as St. Paul tells us, "even our sanctification, that we should abstain from fornication, that every one of us should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour, not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God."

Chastity is either abstinence or continence. Abstinence is that of virgins or widows, continence of married persons. Chaste marriages are honourable and pleasing to God; widdowhood is pitiable in its solitariness and loss, but amiable and comely when it is adorned with gravity and purity, not sullied with the remembrances of past enjoyments, nor with the present desires of a second bed.

A virgin life gives us an image of charming ease and spotless innocence, when it is blest with a just contempt of those carnal delights, that are apt to bury the soul too much in the senses; when it is not disturbed with desires of change, and is always happy in full content with its present condition. The vowed virginity of people in cloisters, is capable indeed of very pious representations: but as those vows are generally constrained, or if sometimes taken by choice, are as often afterwards repented of: so those only who build too much on appearances, on outward works, and not on the sincerity of the mind, the only sacrifice
that

is pleasing to God^d; those only who run their devotion to idolatry, and their zeal to superstition, can be in the praise of it. A voluntary virginity; if the person chooses it to be intirely devoted to the service of God, is certainly commendable, when it does not incapacitate the person from answering other duties of life: not that a virgin state is more holy than a married one, in any thing, but that it has more opportunities to be holy, is less incumbered with cares, and more time to converse with God. Some persons may please him in a married state, than virgins in their virginity; by giving great examples of conjugal affection, by preserving their faith unbroken, by educating their children in his fear, by patience, and contentedness, and the exercise of the virtues proper to

Such do not only please God, but do it in a higher degree than those virgins, whose piety is not answerable to their greater advantages and opportunities: especially if their virginity is the effect of niceness, pride, or avarice. If they keep it because they could not sell it at their own price, or value it so high that they think none worthy of it. This virginity will always be attended with peevishness and sullenness, and render such persons as ill qualified for religious duties, and the most anxious cares of the world. In a word, every state of life, whether of marriage, or widowhood, or virginity, is of itself alike virtuous and innocent. Every one has its particular advantages, and every way which is most holy, is to circumscribe the dominion of the flesh, and to receive the grace, which can make every state to be alike pure and holy, and without it there can be no purity and holiness.

If we consider the equal consequences of lust and uncleanness both as to this world and the next, we shall avoid all filthiness of the flesh, and endeavour to live chastly, temperately, justly and religiously. The obscenity of it appears in nothing more than the darkness it is attended with: it chooses night and dark-

ness, and trembles at the approach of light. "The eye of the adulterer waiteth for the twilight, saying, no eye shall see me, and disguiseth his face: in the dark they dig through houses, which they had marked for themselves in the day-time: they know not the light, for the morning is to them as the shadow of death. He is swift as the waters, their portion is cursed in the earth, he beholdeth not the way of the vineyards; shame is the eldest daughter of uncleanness." A very lively description of the lewd intrigues of the children of lust. Night is the season of murder and adultery, which are often companions; and if the latter is not stained with blood, it is always in fear of spilling it, or having it spilt. Conscience awakens sometimes the most hardened of these sinners; but the temptation soon stifles all its motions, whereas those of religion and virtue are stifled.

Did we reflect a little on the cares and troubles that attend the appetites of uncleanness, that its fruition is sorrow and repentance, that "the way of the adulterer is hedged with thorns," that it is full of fears and jealousies, burning desires, impatient waitings, tediousness of delay, suffering of affronts, and confusion of discovery, it would certainly give an horror for a sin, which is so fatal in its effects and its punishment. Most of its kinds are of that nature, that they involve the ruin of two souls: the fornicator or adulterer steals the soul, as well as injures the body of his neighbour: they are the instruments the common enemy of mankind makes use of to people his infernal world: how often have such wretches sunk from the lawless embraces of harlots and adulteresses to the bottomless pit, from whence there is no rescue, nor no companions but of the accursed, and "the worm which never dies." Indeed there is no consideration, moral or divine, which does not warn us to detest the sin of whoredom, which has a professed enmity against the body itself; "every sin which a man doth is without the body, but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body."

It

“fical union of Christ and his church; he therefore
 “who breaks the knot, which the church and their
 “mutual faith have tyed, and Christ has knit up into
 “a mystery, dishonours a great rite of Christianity,
 “of high spiritual, and excellent signification.” The
 church of Rome, which turns all her worship into idolatry, turns this contract into a sacrament; but though we must not pay it such idolatrous reverence, we must look upon it as a sacred vow, solemnly made before God, whom we called to witness before the congregation, and who has denounced a thousand woes, both here and hereafter, against those that break it.

Uncleanness is the parent of blindness of mind, inconsideration, precipitancy, or giddiness in actions, self-love, hatred of God, love of present pleasures, a despite or despair of the joys of religion and heaven; whereas a pure mind in a chaste body, is the mother of wisdom and deliberation, sober counsel and ingenuous actions, open deportment and sweet carriage, sincere principles and unprejudiced understanding, love of God and self-denial, peace and confidence, holy prayers, and spiritual comforts, a joy of spirit infinitely greater than the carnal and fleeting joys of unchastity: “for to overcome pleasure is the greatest
 “pleasure, and no victory is greater than that which is got
 “over our lusts and filthy inclinations.”

Common honesty, methinks, is of itself sufficient to prevent us from falling into the sins of fornication and adultery; and common shame, enough to deter men from giving way to so beastly an appetite; how are such abhorred by all sober and religious persons? They are pointed at as so many ugly monsters; and while the adulterers and whoremongers pride it perhaps in their own imaginations, that they have made conquest of their neighbours wives and daughters, all good people look upon them as the scandal and pests of mankind. In Scripture we read, that Abimelech made it death for the men of Gerar to meddle with the wife
 of

of Isaac, and Judah condemned Thamar to be burnt for her adultery. Besides the law made to put the adulterous person to death, God constituted a settled and constant miracle to discover the adultery of a suspected woman, "that her bowels should burst with drinking the waters of jealousy." All nations, barbarous and civil, agree in a general detestation of so dishonest and shameful a crime. Several attempts have been made in our own country to destroy it: the Puritans were for punishing it with death, and a law had like to have past some years since to the same good purpose: but to our shame be it spoken, the crime was too general, the offenders too great, and not the nation too merciful; for God forbid, that those who with pleasure see daily poor criminals carried to the gallows for little thefts and robberies, should be grieved to see those punished with death, that had robbed whole families of their peace, and honour, and estates, by bringing into them bastardy and infamy.

The middle ages of the church were not pleased that the adulteress should be put to death; as the church grew more degenerate, the manners of Christians grew also more depraved: but in the primitive ages, the civil laws, by which they were then governed, gave leave to the injured husband to kill his adulterous wife, if he took her in the fact. The partiality of this law to men have caused an enquiry, "whether is worse the adultery of the man or the woman?" Let us examine that question: in doing which we must observe, that, in respect to the person, the fault is greater in a man than a woman, who is of a more pliant and easy spirit, of a weaker understanding, and has nothing to supply the unequal strengths of men but the defence of a passive nature, and the armour of modesty, the natural ornament of that sex. "It is unjust, said the good emperor Antonius, "that men should demand chastity and severity from his wife, which himself will not observe towards her." But this injustice is become so common, that if

adultery is still reckoned a sin towards God, yet men are far from having remorse of conscience for it, as it is an injury to their wives; though to exact chastity of them, and not practise it themselves, is as if a man should persuade his wife to fight against those enemies to which he had yielded himself a prisoner.

Now, in respect of the evil consequences of adultery, it is worse in a woman than a man, as bringing bastardy into a family, disinherisons, and great injuries to the lawful children, infinite violations of peace, murders, divorces, and all the effects of rage and madness. In respect of the crime, and as relating to God, they are equal, intolerable, and damnable. It is no more permitted to men to have many wives, than to women to have many husbands; in this respect they have the same privileges, and their sin is the same. Adulterous persons were refused the holy communion by the ancient church, until they had done seven years penance in fasting and sackcloth, in severe afflictions, and instruments of chastity and sorrow, according to the discipline of those ages.

How many are now admitted daily to that blessed ordinance, who boast of their adultery, and glory in their filthiness? How many do our laws oblige to this communion of saints, or to renounce the provisions of life? The sin of those that take it unworthily must lie in part at their doors who lay so violent a temptation, as is bread, in their way. Where is the purity, the severity of the ancient discipline? How is the sacrament of the body of Christ prostituted to mean and mercenary uses? Is the adulterer forbidden to approach it? Is the sacred cup taken from the foul hand of the whoremonger? Are communicants so examined as to intend a through inquiry into their preparedness to sit at the table of the Lord? Or are not the open whoremonger and adulterer taken on their own credit, because the law has enjoined them to communicate or starve? I must confess I think of this
most

most holy ordinance with so much reverence, that I cannot without trembling consider what herds of adulterous beasts have the glorious privilege of the elect and chosen of God.

Having treated of the virtue of chastity, with respect to its opposite lust, let us reflect on its proper offices, and in what that that grace and duty is exercised.

We must resist all unclean thoughts, and not indulge our fancies with uncleanness, though possibly it may not always inflame desire. We must never humour ourselves with fantastic notions of love; for though either by shame, impatience, or want of opportunity, we may be restrained from the act, it will not be our faults that the sin was not committed; the mind is as criminal as the body, and our punishment will be the same.

Have a chaste eye and a chaste hand, it being all one with what part of the body we commit adultery. If a man lets his eye loose, and enjoys the lust of it, he is an adulterer. "Look not on a woman to lust after her;" wanton glances will create lewd wishes and ideas, and supposing all the members to be restrained, yet if the eye be permitted to lust, a man can no otherwise be called chaste than he can be called severe and mortified, who sits all day seeing plays and revellings, and out of greediness to fill his eye neglects his belly. There are some vessels, which, if you offer to lift by the bottom, you cannot stir them, but are soon removed if you take them by the ears. It matters not with which of your members you are carried from your duty. The sure consequence of all wanton dalliance is desire, and if you refrain from the act it will not be out of fear of God, but fear of man, of yourself, or others. Had you feared God, you would not have run into temptation; and the pleasure you take in gazing on and lusting after a beautiful woman, carries as much guilt with it as her embraces. For it is not virtue that restrains you from them, but necessity; you could not enjoy any more; therefore you did not; you would not, because

because a stronger passion, terror, at that time, mastered you; God was not all that while in your heart. Can you say that your heart and mind were chaste? Did you detest all uncleanness? Did you check the motions the tempting objects inspired? If it was not thus with you, you are as much a whoremonger and adulterer, as much lies upon you to be repented of, as if your whole body had been involved in the crime. To detest uncleanness, to dislike its motions, past actions, circumstances, discourses, ought to be the chastity of virgins and widows, of old persons and eunuchs especially, and generally of all men according to their several necessities. Filthy discourse is a great inflamer of lust. Avoid all indecencies of language with a great care; keep the tongue chaste, good manners has banished this impurity from conversation. It as much mis-becomes a gentleman as a Christian to accustom himself, or allow himself in the language of the stews: but that is but a poor consideration, in comparison of the presence we should always remember we are in, that of the all-hearing and all-seeing God.

Temptations to lust are of too prevailing a nature to be disputed with: do not think to reason yourselves out of them, when the very workings of the mind in all such disputes serve to create desire; passion will be too strong for your arguments; you will soon give up a cause you wish to lose. Fly, therefore, all temptation; think not at all of it; drive it immediately out of your head with religion or business. If the mind has not conquered lust, the resistance from the body will be but very weak; it is an enemy that is to be treated otherwise than with direct war and contention: if you hear it speak, it ruins you, and the very arguments you go about to answer, leave a relish upon the tongue. A man may be burnt if he goes near the fire, though but to quench his house; and by handling pitch, though but to take it from your clothes, you defile your fingers. Besides to argue with temptation shews a pleasure in
being.

being tempted; if you had such an abhorrence for the sin as you ought to have had, you would not dare to have debated it, you would be frightened at the distant approach of it, and fly from it as from destruction.

Idleness is a great incentive to lust, and must on that account be avoided; it creeps in at those emptinesses of time, when the soul is unemployed, and the body is at ease. No easy, healthful, and idle person was ever chaste, if a temptation fell in his way. Of all employments bodily labour is most useful to answer this good end. When the body is tired with honest toil, it will give no encouragement to the tempter to attack; he will never venture upon you if he is not sure of having the flesh on his side. The soul of itself would, in most cases, be too hard for him, and in this particularly; there is nothing in impurity which does not shock it when it is not biassed by the lust of the body; keep that low, and the mind will raise itself above temptation. Church discipline enjoins corporal mortifications, and hard usages of the body, to its members. Fastings, solemn and real, may be helps to chastity; but the mind must be first well convinced of the danger of this sin, or all these outward penances will avail little, those especially that are purely nominal. There is no greater farce played than such fasters act toward heaven, who will not indeed eat flesh, but will mortify themselves with the most exquisite delicacies in fish; improved for the palate by the most heartening sauces: these, in so disciplining themselves mock him who will not be mocked; and instead of mortifying, pamper the flesh, and add new fuel to the flame of lust. A spare diet, a thin coarse table, seldom refreshment, frequent and real fastings, are of some profit against the spirit of fornication. By cutting off the enemies provisions we doubtless weaken his strength; yet all this will not avail, unless we conceive a detestation of the evil of it, as an offence to God, and arm our minds against it by his grace. Poverty
sins.

sins against chastity as well as riches, and colleges are equally polluted with courts. One would think that the anxiety of such as are in want should not give room for those hot desires, which are the natural, and often the intended effects of luxury; yet in prisons, where the confined wretches feed hard and lie hard, lust frequently awakens them in their miserable nights, and the devil flatters them that the enjoyment of one vile pleasure, which is in their power, will compensate for the loss of all others that are not so. The extraordinary mortifications enjoined by the church of Rome, and recommended by some protestants who lay too much stress on outward discipline, are not, methinks, worthy the dignity of Christianity. Shall I boast of my purity when I am reduced to impotence? or confide in that chastity which is the effect of pain? when ease and strength are recovered, and the body will not bear to be always in pain and impotency, if the mind has no better defences, how soon will temptation break in upon it, and fill up that dangerous interval with sin. "To bring the body under" was St. Paul's remedy, and it is a good one, but it may deceive us; it is a traitor that will deceive itself when we most trust to it; the soul must be always upon the watch, and then outward discipline may and will be effectual. What a noble chastity was that Nicomedian prince blest with, who, as St. Jerom tell us, being tempted upon flowers, and a perfumed bed, with a soft violence, and so far tied down to the temptation, that he could not disengage himself, being solicited with all the wanton circumstances of Asian lewdness, by an impure courtesan, lest the easiness of his posture should betray him, he spit out his tongue into her face, to represent that no virtue costs so much as chastity.

Fly then from all occasions of impurity; from loose company, balls, revellings, indecent mixtures in dancing, idle talk, private society with strange women, gazing upon a beauteous face, from singing women,

amorous

Amorous gestures, loose attire, feasts and perfumes, from wine and strong drinks made to persecute chastity: some of these are the very prologues to lust. Remember it is easier to die for chastity than to live with it, and the executioner could not extort a consent from some persons from whom a lover would have intreated it. The glory of chastity will easily overcome the rudeness of fear and violence, but easiness and softness, persuasion and tenderness, like the sun, make a virgin lay by her veil and robe; which persecution, like the northern wind, would make her hold fast and wrap close about her.

When a woman thinks she is beloved, she is very far gone in the way of loving; and apt to believe there cannot be so much harm as is represented to her, in what is so generous and grateful. Poor delusion! should generosity and gratitude make her damn her own soul, because her lover would damn his? But the devil puts on all shapes, and appears sometimes like an angel of light; he puts fair glosses on the foulest actions, confounds vice and virtue, and covers a pleasing temptation with the most specious pretences.

He who will secure his chastity, must first cure his pride and his rage. Lust is often the punishment of a proud man, to tame the vanity of his pride, by the shame and affronts of unchastity; and the same intemperate heat which makes anger kindles lust.

A sure way to escape temptation is to fly one's self. Avoid being alone when you are afraid of it; seek relief in company, whose modesty may suppress, or their society divert, all unclean thoughts, and not that whose wanton mirth may awaken lust when it was asleep, as is commonly the effect of the joyous and galant conversation of this age. There is a reverence due to numbers which checks the lewdness of the tongue, and take care not to associate with such as are insensible of that reverence, and had rather be merry than discreet and chaste; though what they call
mirth

mirth is generally so beastly when it turns on chastity, that wise men would have an equal contempt and abhorrence for the ribaldry and folly.

Pray often, and fervently, to God, who is the essence of purity, that he would be pleased to reprove and cast out the unclean spirit: for besides the blessings of prayer, by way of reward, it has a natural virtue to restrain this vice. Prayer against it is an unwillingness to act it, and so long as we heartily pray against it our desires are secured, and the tempter has no power. This was St. Paul's other remedy, "For this cause I besought the Lord thrice;" and there is equal reason and advantage in the use of it. The main thing which is to be secured in this affair, is a man's mind, he who goes about to cure lust by bodily exercise alone, or mortifications, shall find them sometimes instrumental to it, always insufficient, and of little profit: but he who has a chaste mind, shall find his body apt enough to take laws; let it do its worst it cannot make a sin, and in its greatest violence, can only produce a little natural uneasiness, not so much trouble as a severe fast, or a hard lodging. If a man be hungry he must eat, if he be thirsty he must drink at some convenient time, or else he dies; but if the body be rebellious, provided the mind be chaste, let it do its worst, if you resolve perfectly not to satisfy it, you can receive no great evil by it.

These considerations may give room for others, arising from every one's own experience. The subject itself is so nice, that it must be touch'd with delicacy. It will be easily comprehended, what are the evils we would exhort to be avoided, what the helps we may find in order to it. It is a sad thing, that a sin which carries along with it eternal damnation, should pass off as a trifle; that it should be a sort of a jest to speak ill of it; and that without being advocates for whoremongers and adulterers, one can hardly escape the scandal of being precise. The souls of men are not to be:

be complimented into security; and let the greatest and fairest of mortals know, the time will come, when to have been fair and great will avail them nothing, and to have been pure and holy will crown them with immortal glory.

The remedies we have mentioned, are of universal efficacy against lewdness in all cases extraordinary and violent; but in ordinary and common, the remedy which God has provided, honourable marriage, has a natural efficacy, besides a virtue, by divine blessing, to cure the inconveniencies which otherwise might afflict persons temperate and sober.

It is true, marriage is, like other good things, seldom spoken of but in sport; it is generally taken to prevent the inconveniencies of fortune, rather than those of virtue: the punishment as generally follows the crime; and those that marry for money only, have rarely any thing else with it that tends to happiness. No wonder people, so given up to avarice, should fall into other sins; that the neglect of those wives whom they took out of covetousness, and not out of love, should end in adultery on both sides, and such vicious marriages be the ruin of their peace here, and their happiness hereafter.



M O D E S T Y.

WILL not the ladies take themselves to be affronted, if we should so much as question that they want lessons on this virtue? Will not men despise us for thinking it becomes them? Is not the bashful man in the cavalier phrase a coward? Is it not a term of reproach? It is very hard, that in a country professing Christianity and reformation, most of these virtues are so out of fashion, that it
is

is a most uncourtly business to endeavour to recommend them. Those that do it are forced to affect ludicrous turns, and to perform by satire, and not by instruction. People who are not afraid of being damned, are afraid of being laughed at, and such as reprove with gravity and concern, may answer the dictates of their own consciences, but will have very little effect on their neighbours.

Let us however, do our duty; let us study to find out the paths of truth and salvation, and put those that err in the right way in which they should walk. No virtue will give more grace to all their actions than this of modesty; whether we consider it as opposed to boldness and indecency, or to lightness and wantonness.

Zeno has not ill-defined it to "be the Science of decent motion," it being that which guides and regulates the whole behaviour, checks and controls all rude exorbitancy, and is the great civilizer of conversation: it is indeed a virtue of general influence; it does not only balast the mind with sober and humble thoughts of one's self, it also steers every part of the outward frame: it appears in the face in calm and meek looks: the impression of it is so strong there, that it has thence acquired the name of *shamefacedness*. Certainly nothing gives so great a lustre to beauty in women; it is of itself so beautiful, that it has been a charm to hearts insensible of all others, and conquered when a fair face has without it set out all its glories in vain. An innocent modesty, a native simplicity of look, eclipse all the glaring splendors of art and dress. Let nature and art contribute to render a woman lovely, if boldness be to be read in her face, it blots out all the lines of beauty, and like a cloud over the sun, intercepts the view of all that was otherwise amiable, rendring its blackness the more observable, by being placed near somewhat that was apt to attract the eyes.

Modesty

Modesty confines not itself to the face, it is there only in shadow and effigy; it is in life and motion, in the words, whence she banishes all indecency and rudeness, all insolence and disdain, with whatever else may render a person troublesome or ridiculous to Company. It does not only refine the language, it often modulates the voice and accent, it admits no unhandsome earnestness or lewdness of discourse; the latter of which was thought so indecent in Carneades, tho' in his public lecture, that the Gymnasiarch reprovd him for it; and sure if it were not allowable to a philosopher in his school, it will less become a woman in ordinary conversation. A woman's tongue should be like the imaginary music of the spheres, sweet and charming, but not to be heard at a distance. As modesty prescribes the manner, so it does also the measure of speaking; it restrains all excess of talking, a fault incident to none but the bold. To monopolize the discourse of the company, is a certain sign of the good opinion a person has of himself, and as certain a way to lose that of the company; every one desires to be heard in his turn, every one expects applause from what he says, as well as he who would ingross all: he who would please in conversation, must endeavour to please others, and that cannot be done without hearing them with good liking, with which they will then hear you. The divine poet Herbert says on this occasion,

“ A civil Guest,
 “ Will no more talk all, than eat all at a feast.”

To be always talking in company is assuming an insufferable superiority over it; it looks as if you took them for your pupils, and thought they wanted your instruction. The wise Socrates said, “ It is arrogance to speak all, and to be willing to hear nothing.” This is a vice in both sexes; the forward coxcomb is sure to be the jest or contempt of those he is eternally talking to,

to, and the as forward coquette renders herself as
 culous as she thinks she is engaging: it is an in-
 becoming a man, and more especially a woman.

This was so much the sentiment of the antient
 mans, that they allowed not women to speak pub-
 though it were in their own necessary defence; inso-
 that when Amasia stood forth to plead her own
 in the senate, they look'd on it as so prodigious a
 that they sent to consult the oracle what it port-
 to the State: and tho' these first severities were
 lost in the successes of that empire, tho' their E-
 conquests introduced luxury and corruption of
 ners; yet Valerius Maximus could find but two
 whose either necessity or impudence persuaded the
 repeat this unhandsome attempt.

Is not the indecency of talkativeness in women
 of the chief reasons of the scandal they lie und-
 that account? it is said, they talk too much, be-
 they should talk but little; and when they err in it,
 the more observable, because it is unhandsome;
 ther it were from the ungracefulness of the thin-
 from the propension women have to it, I shal
 determine, but we find the apostle very earnest i
 caution against it: in his epistle to the Corint
 he expressly "injoins women to keep silence in
 "church," where he affirms it a shame for them to
 Our Quakers have broke in upon this injunction
 pretence they have for it is no great compliment t
 sex: they alledge, that St. Paul did not forbid w
 to teach when inspired, but to speak to one anothe
 disturb the congregation; as if their tongues we
 ways so unruly, that devotion itself could not
 them within bounds. But leaving these enthusia
 their whimsies, tho' St. Paul's injunction seems
 only restrained to ecclesiastical assemblies, yet the
 other places where he is more general, as in his
 to Timothy, "let women learn in silence," and aga
 "to be in silence." I hope we shall not be accused
 bree

ing, for setting Scripture before the sex, and
g what they are enjoined to there. The apostle
is his phrase not only on the inferiority of the
in regard to the creation and first sin, but also
: presumption that they needed instruction to-
which, silence has always been reckoned an in-
ible qualification, the introductory precept in all
s, as that in which all attention is founded. "If
women of our age, (says a serious and sensible au-
think they have outgone that novice state the apos-
poses, and want no teaching; I must crave leave
eve they want that very first principle which should
m to learn the knowledge of their ignorance." A
: which so grows with study, that Socrates after a
ife spent in pursuit of wisdom, gave this as the
f his learning, "This only I know, that I know
g;" a proficiency that is much wanting to the
s of both sexes, who confute the common
n, and give what they have not by making their
ance visible to others, tho' it be undiscernable to
elves. To such may not unfitly be applied the
m of Zeno to a talkative youth, "their ears
llen into their tongues." Men must not assume
emelves a privilege of perpetually speaking,
se it is denied to women. It is not becoming in
one, because it does not become the other. But it
: more indecent and more observable in women,
therefore prest the more home to them to beware

r those of the sex who are guilty of this vice are
ally guilty of another, which is slander; their
ic runs mostly against somebody or other, whether
have or have not offended them: They never
matter, either from their own invention or the
tion of others. Truth will not furnish them with
an hour's conversation, the rest of it is made
with what they have heard or invented of their
labours. They begin always with a dis-
rence

rence of the crime they are about to commit. They will by no means wrong the injured person, and then they do it as maliciously and effectually as they can. It is to be hoped it prevails mostly among the vulgar; but the great have also their scandalous chronicles, and they manage themselves in a great measure, as if the best way for them to secure their own reputation, was to blacken others. The education of the noble should set them above such base and mean entertainments. But as tattling is the effect of idleness, it is not unreasonable to be feared, that where there is most of the cause, there will be some of the effect; and indeed it would puzzle one to conjecture how that round of formal visits among persons of quality should be kept up without this incessant chat of calumny. Can their visits only be a dumb shew? Does the conversation roll upon the unfashionable theme of piety and virtue, wisdom and discretion? Is good housewifery one of the dull topics they handle there? When the news from the opera and playhouse is run over, what remains but that of the park and the assembly. Thence arise a thousand subjects of scandal, which is a most inexhaustible reserve. It has so many springs to feed it, it is scarce possible it should fail. It flatters the envy of some, the spleen of others, the revenge of rivals, either in love or splendor, passions which the sex are the more subject to, the less they are naturally able to defend themselves against them. But this vice of slander is not more frequently introduced by any thing than the vanity of the wit, which has no where a more free and exorbitant range, than in censuring or deriding: It finds not only exercise but triumph too. Vain persons seldom considering the infirmities or follies of others without some complacencies and assuming reflections on themselves, which how disagreeable it renders this liberty of talking to that modesty we recommend, is obvious enough: and would to God it were only opposite to that. It is no less

less so to all the obligations of justice and charity, which are scarcely so frequently violated by any thing, as by this licence of the tongue.

Another vice of this kind which the sex is generally charged with, is the revealing of secrets; an infirmity presumed so incident to them, that Aristotle is said to have made it one of the three things he solemnly repented of, that he had ever trusted a secret with a woman. By how much the greater prejudice they lie under in this respect, the greater ought to be their caution to vindicate, not only themselves, but their sex from the imputation, which is indeed extremely reproachful. This blabbing humour being a symptom of a loose impotent soul, a kind of incontinence of the mind, that can retain nothing committed to it; but as if that also had its diabolic passion, perpetually and almost insensibly evacuating all. However willing men are to appropriate this to the sex, yet the fault is owing only to an ill constitution of mind; for there are instances of heroic taciturnity in women, as shining as any the men can boast; in whom this ill constitution is often no less visible. Those women who by reason and virtue have acquired a firmness and solidity of soul, are as sure repositories of a secret as the most masculine confident: such therefore should be clear'd of the general accusation; and their example shews the rest, that nature has put them under no fatal necessity of being thus impotent. A secret is no such unruly thing but it may be kept in; they may take the wise man's word for it; "If thou hast heard a word let it die with thee, and behold it will not burst thee."

These reflections are in a particular manner address'd to the softer sex; not but that they are useful to men too, modesty being a virtue in them as well as in women, as it is oppos'd to impudence. To have that command of ones self, as faithfully to keep the secrets we are intrusted with, shews a strong mind, and is a
piece

piece of daring manliness, which women may without breach of modesty. It would be well if would take it in exchange for that virile boldness is now too common even among ladies. Such a degenerate age do we live in, that every thing seems inverted; the different manners of sexes are confounded; men fall into the effeminacy and delicacy of women, and women take up the confidence, the boldness of men, under a notion of good breeding. A man formerly reputed the colour of virtue, is reckoned worse manners than those things which ought to censure it. How do they stand the insults of lewdness at the Theatre? and to blush at them would be counted a weakness which nothing but the simplicity of a country girl could excuse. A weakness that wears off in those who bring it to town with them. A few weeks playhouse discipline polishes them of that rusticity, and advances them to a modish appearance, which seldom terminates in itself, but is destined to carry them on till they arrive at a perfect metamorphosis. Their gesture, their language, nay their habit too, being affectedly masculine, they have to serve them even in their bedchambers, and with no scruple of receiving visits in their beds, to imitate the freedom of the French, free only in vanity and impudence, and slaves in every thing else. So that, "others did not remember them to be women, themselves could easily forget it."

Was this affectation confined to indifferent things were more tolerable; but alas! it extends farther; there are women, who think they have not made sufficient escape from their sex, till they have assumed the vices of men too. A sober modest dialect is effeminate for them; a blustering, ranting style is taken up; and to shew their proficiency in it, adorned with as many oaths and imprecations, as if they had had taken breeding in a camp, and meant to vindicate their freedom from the imputation of timorousness, by daring.

Almig

If it is equally abominable and damnable. She who is first a prostitute to wine will soon be to lust also; she has dismissed her guards, discarded all the suggestions of reason as well as religion, and is at the mercy of any and every assailant: And when we consider how much fuller the world is of Ammons than of Josephs, it will not be hard to guess the fate of that woman's chastity, which has no other bottom than that of men's. Thus unless her vice secure her virtue, and the loathsomeness of one prevents attempts on the other, it is scarce to be imagined, that a woman who loses her sobriety should keep her honesty. This vice, as well as others, has gained ground in our days more than ever. It is to be hoped that the scandal of the times abuses the sex, in the reports of their immoderate use of strong drinks. Let them have a care how they give way to it; it will steal upon them, and increase insensibly, and what they at first dare not do out of their closets, they will in time do openly and without shame. Let them affect indigestions for the sake of the cordials, that little piece of modesty will leave them when custom has taken off the indecency of drinking them. It seldom stops there; and was the infamy that attends it in this world its only punishment, a woman should, methinks, have an abhorrence for a vice which will certainly make her abhorred.

Having considered modesty, as it is opposed to boldness and indecency, let us now consider it as opposed to levity and wantonness.

In this sense we shall find it the most indispensable requisite of a woman, so essential and natural to the sex, that, as far as she departs from it, so far does she depart from womanhood itself; but the total abandoning it, ranks women among brutes; nay it sets them as far below them as acquired vileness is below a native: It is so much an instinct of nature, that though many suppress it in themselves, yet they may not so

darken

long time. They who keep their ranks, and tho' they are
the assaults, yet stay to receive them, may be
from safety. She who lends a patient ear
life of her wit and beauty, may do it at first
to gratify vanity only; but the flattery be-
comes her in the end, and she insensibly declines to a
rest for that person who values her so much: she
begin with thinking his passion is only an ex-
ercise, as such, cherish that out of vanity,
and afterwards will reward out of love: she
be apt to put the best construction on whatever
eye and does; his rudeness will be taken for the
heat of his passion, and easily obtain pardon:
she begins to love him when she would take
him for a fool, and finding in herself that
who loves her so much can never have a thought
of hurting her, she begins to love him completely.
In her manner, all the passion that can be love
is immediately and without reserve, and
she then can be no longer hurt or wounded, and
is perfectly happy.

If it is equal first a propensity to it; of which sort is all lightness has carriage, wanton glances, obscene discourse, things of which shew a woman so weary of her honour, that the next comer may reasonably expect a surrender, and consequently be invited to the assault. There is a lightness of carriage which may be criminal, tho' without any intended incontinency, as it inflames desire in the beholder, whether it is gratified or not. This lightness is what women are far from thinking a vice; it gives them an air, as they call it, and affectation, which is always an offence to modesty. As for the estraiterie of vicious women, it is so gross that it deserves not to be corrected with lectures only; and where some have not abandoned themselves to the utmost license in lewdness, yet their looks, their gestures, their wit, if they have any, tend all to temptation, they will charm at all ventures, they will be admired, be beloved, and to compass their ends, exchange that truly lovely simplicity, which was the ornament of the women of old, for a forward bidding impudence, which is forbidding to all men of sense and delicacy. One wonders how young women so soon acquire this impudent carriage, so contrary to their native modesty: It may first be taken up as fashion in dress, merely in imitation of others, and embraced implicitly upon the authority of those whose examples govern the mode. When a silly girl, who has still so much of the child as to admire every thing that glitters, sees these things practised by the gay people of the world, it is not strange if she takes them as a part of their accomplishments, and upon peril of that formidable calamity of being unfashionable, conforms to them; which does not so much extenuate the guilt of those few seduced persons, as it aggravates that of the seducers, and attests the corruptions of the age, that those things which the less hardened sort of prostitutes were formerly ashamed of, should now pass into the frequency and avowedness of a fashion, and become

123

wa-
rest:

the discipline of youth; as if vice now dis-
tave any punies in its school, and therefore
sterous anticipation makes its pupils begin
were wont to end, initiating them first into
efulness, which was wont to be the product
long habit. This is not the only state of
hey who keep their ranks, and tho' they do
e assaults, yet stay to receive them, may be
from safety. She who lends a patient ear
to the, e of her wit and beauty, may do it at first
perhaps to gratify vanity only; but the flattery be-
witches her in the end, and she insensibly declines to a
kindness for that person who values her so much: she
will begin with thinking his passion is only an es-
teem, and, as such, cherish that out of vanity,
which she afterwards will reward out of love: she
will be apt to put the best construction on whatever
he says and does; his rudenesses will be taken for the
violence of his passion, and easily obtain pardon:
she, by degrees, suffers in him what she would take
to be insolent in another, and fancying in herself that
one who loves her so much can never have a thought
that is injurious to her, she forgets that all his compli-
ments are mercenary, all his passion lust, that to hear
him is immodest, to be pleased with him wicked; and
if she does not fly in time, she will catch the flame
that is kindled in him, and they both perish in it for
ever.

Have a care how you presume on the innocence of
your first intentions; you may as well, upon the con-
fidence of a sound constitution, enter a pest-house, and
converse with the plague, whose contagion does not
more subtly insinuate itself than this sort of tempta-
tion. And as in that case a woman would not stay to
desire what were the critical distance at which she might
approach with safety, but would run as far from it as
she could; so in this it no less concerns her to remove
herself from the possibility of danger, and how un-

fashionable soever it be, to put on such a severe modesty, that her very looks may guard her, and discourage the most impudent attack. For it is certain a modest countenance gives a check to lust; there is something awful, as if there was something divine in it; and with all the simplicity of innocence, it has a commanding power that restrains the fury of desire. Such an authority there is in virtue, that where 'tis evident, 'tis apt to controul all loose appetites, and he must not only be lustful but sacrilegious, who attempts to violate such a sanctuary.

A great hindrance to the putting on this business of behaviour, is the fear of women to lose any of the glory of their beauty by it; a settled look does not give so much grace as a smile. They learn the art of languishments of the eye, to give life to unborn passion, even by dying glances; and they flatter themselves that the tenderness they affect to move, may pass off for innocence, and those languishments themselves for modesty. There is an impudence in the very bashful part of their behaviour; the flutter of the fan, the awkwardness of the look, the disorder of the gesture at hearing what they should know nothing of, warm the imagination of those men that see them; and if those modest women could not, as they pretend, bear the insolence of vice, they would rather avoid than defy them. Those who to make sure work leave no beauty concealed, thinking custom excuses the exposing all, have been taught already, that miserable are the trophies of beauty which are raised on the ruins of virtue and honour; and she who to boast the length of her hair should hang herself in it, would but act the same folly in a lower instance. It has been observed, that the ends of vice are very seldom gained by the means it makes use of; and in this of immodesty, the bold forward beauty is not so sure of conquest as the shy and innocent. Mankind esteems those things most which are at a distance; whereas an easy and

and cheap compliance begets contempt. While women govern themselves by the exact rule of prudence, their lustre is like the meridian sun in its brightness, which, though less approachable is counted more glorious. How often do you hear men commend that aspect of modesty which they would fain circumvent? If women affect finery and comeliness to render themselves agreeable only, let them know, they are never so comely and fine, as when they are clothed in virgin modesty; never so amiable as when they are adorned with the beauties of innocence and virtue. By being reserved, their triumph will be the more illustrious; parley and conquest are the most distant things. She who descends to treat with an assailant, whatever he may tell her of being her captive, his purpose is to make her his. He pretends to be intirely at her devotion, when all the while he is working her destruction. The servitude of a prostitute is the most slavish in the world; for besides all the interests of another life, which she basely resigns, she sacrifices all that is valuable in this; she puts her reputation wholly in the power of him who has debauched her, and which is worse, her reformation too. If she should have a mind to return to virtue, she dares not for fear he should divulge her former strayings from it. Thus, like Cataline, she is engaged to future evils, to secure the past: She subjects herself not only to his lust, but to all his humours and fancies; and not only to his, but to the fancies and humours of all those who had been instrumental to their privacies. None of them all must be displeased, for fear they should blab; and when it is remembered what sort of cattle they are, which are enquirers in such affairs, there can scarce be any thing more deplorable, than to be within their lash. It is true indeed, some have found a way to cure this uneasiness, by being their own delators, not only confessing, but boasting the crime. They imagine they can prevent accusation by impudence,

dence, and by seeming to despise shame, ende to avoid it. What misery are such creatures falle to ! need there be a hell to punish them ? The insulted by wretches as miserable as themselves, have no defence against their insults, but that sensibility. Those of them that are least abash have often recourse to this worst of mischiefs to them from infamy, impatient of being always in they think as Cæsar did, " It is better to die " than be always in fear ;" though an open de of reproach may cure the fear ; yet it proves the whereas in the impeachment of others, there is for doubts, and charity may incline some to dis it. To justify the fact makes the evidence uncol lable, and renders the offender doubly infamous besides the infamy which adheres to the crime, th a distinct portion due to the impudence ; yet lik scorpion, it must cure its own sting, and though i creates the obloquy, yet it deadens the sense of it.

When their foreheads are thus steeld against all pussions of shame, they are still liable to any painful effects of their sin. What fears of being what jealousies of rivals do often torture them ? not without ground ; for they cannot but know, the same humour of variety which engaged galants in their love, may do the same for another, another ; and so on ; in which they will often hav mortification to see themselves neglected and for for such as have neither their beauty nor their fancy being the tyrant of this passion, it is as po to grasp air, as to confine a wandering lust. Be what anxious apprehensions have they of the appr of age, which they are sure will render them los and despicable, as also of all intermediate decay beauty ? How critically do they examine their g and every wrinkle it represents in their face, bec a deep gash in the heart. But if they have at any the leisure, or indeed the courage to look inward,

view is yet more dreadful, a deformed soul, spoiled of its innocence, and rendered almost as brutish as the sin it has consented to. Though it be in some respect like the "beast that perisheth", it is not, it cannot be in that which would avail it most: an endless being it cannot lose, nor can it expect any thing from that pre-eminence of its nature, but an infinity of misery. 'This is such an amazing consideration, as, methinks should allay the hottest blood, no impure flames being so fierce as to contest with those of unquenchable fire: It is therefore a very impious, no unskilful artifice of those who would corrupt the manners of women, to vitiate their principles, and by extinguishing all hopes or fears of another world, persuade them to immerse boldly into all the abominations of this. 'They find them easily deluded where they desire to be so: 'They believe what is most pleasing to lust: 'They would have a full swing of pleasure upon earth, and such can never have any hope, any desire of the joys of heaven: they bury themselves in sense, and without severe repentance, will never rise again but to eternal damnation; they wish there may be no future life, knowing that it must be a terrible one to them, by their manner of spending this: 'They defy the Almighty daily by their impurities; can they think of appearing before him, to give an account of their wicked lives, without horror? Would it not be better for them there should be no God before whom to appear, than an omniscient all-seeing one, who has been a witness of their most secret sins, and even the pollution of their hearts? The mountains they will call upon to cover them from the presence of the God of purity, are immoveable, and they must stand fully exposed to his intolerable wrath. Better for them that they could return to their original nothing; and because it is so much for their interest, that there should be no God, the way to seduce them, is, to persuade them there is none. 'This is now an art of courtship; this age dares not trust only to the former ways of seducement, the tempter is

for body and soul, by corrupting the one with infamy, and the other with Infidelity, by vitiating morals, and securing their impenitence. Many are so much more concerned for their bodies than souls, that they are contented the one should be elevated upon the depression of the other: While with a transport they can bear this outward form applaud angelical or divine; they can very tamely endure hear their better part vilify'd and despised, define be only a puff of air in their nostrils, which will with their expiring breath, or in the atheist's plume "vanish as the soft air." Whereas they should consider that they who preach this doctrine to them, design it to infer a pernicious use. It is a maxim in politicks, those counsels should be sufficiently scanned, which in the front the adversary's interest. This is certainly never more visible than in the case we are discolor of; he who has once gained this point, nevering to contest for all the rest: for he who can per a woman out of her soul will soon command her body then what was at first his interest becomes hers at and her wishes of the immortality of the soul are stronger than it is possible her belief could be; with an abundant confirmation of what has been affirm the servile wretched condition of such a person. I not the consciences of many cannot only attest much improve the description of the deplorable they are in. Consult that bosom monitor, you have offended; without that, all lectures of modesty and innocence will be insignificant.

Those who are yet untainted, and by being so their judgments clear and unbiassed, should soberly consider the misery of their condition, not only to avoid but secure their own: And whenever they see the splendor, the dress, the equipage of a woman, seem to proclaim her happiness, let them through that fallacy, and answer, "That those are happy who are so at their end." Their most thin

rich garments, are but like the garlands on a beast designed for sacrifice: their diamond necklaces and bracelets, are but the chains, not of their ornament, but slavery: the silver and gold that glitter in their costly array, cover, perhaps, like that of Herod, a pestered body, which is not seldom their fate, or however a more putrid soul. They who can thus consider them will avoid one great snare, for it is not always so much the lust of the flesh, as that of the eyes, which betrays a woman. It is the known infirmity of the sex, to love gaiety and splendid appearance, which render all temptations of that sort, so prevalent over them, that those who have not a solid judgment of things will be scarce secure.

Women are more one anothers rivals in shew, in dress, in furniture, in equipage, and expence, than in galantry. That lover who offers the woman he attacks a fine house and a coach, will much sooner prevail than he who offers her his heart. Pride has been a greater bawd to unchastity than incontinency. Women think the splendid appearance hides the sin, and that the filth of it will not be seen amidst so much lustre. They imagine, foolishly enough, that nothing can be infamous that is envied; for they that envy them have as great a share of infamy as themselves. All virtuous people strip them in their imaginations of their borrowed plumes, and look on them as on the lewd bird of the night, with scorn or detestation.

If these unhappy creatures had given themselves time to reflect seriously upon the just value of the trifles they were so fond of, they would have found there is no manner of comparison between all the pomps of sin, tho' never so rich and so shining, and the true and real glory of virtue and honour. Tho' those terms seem in this loose age to be exploded, yet where the things are visible, they extort a secret veneration, even from those who think it their concern publicly to deride them. Whereas on the contrary, a woman that has lost her honour and reputation is the contempt even of those that betrayed.

trayed her to it, and brings a perpetual blot on her name and family. For in the character of a woman, let wit and beauty, and all female accomplishments stand in the front, yet if wantonness bring up the rear, the satire soon devours the panegyrick; and as in an echo, the last words only will reverberate, her vice will be remembered when all the rest will be forgotten.

There is one worldly consideration, which it will not be amiss for women to think upon in their conduct; and that is, their being most exposed to censure; and they should therefore be most careful not to give occasion for it. Their actions, their gestures, their looks, are narrowly observed by both sexes, the one to corrupt, the other to condemn them. They should be always on their guard against scandal, their reputation being of the kind of those nice flowers, which the least blast withers and kills. Immodesty in their behaviour will want no spies to betray itself; it strikes and shocks at once; and impudence will expose the fairest woman to the disgrace of being both affronted and contemned. It is not only the Christian religion that enjoins the practice of this virtue, natural morals also teach it. Friendship and acquaintance with immodest people, was scandalous in the times of pagan darkness, Christianity, whose doctrines are full of lessons of purity and innocence, should make us refine in all things upon the virtues of the heathens; for what with them was indecent only, is with us damnable.

Since the acquaintance and friendship of vitiated women is so shameful, it is of the greatest importance to the sex, to make a judicious choice of their company: A duty as much incumbent on men, as has been shewn in the foregoing pages, but especially on women, to preserve their modesty unblemished. Vice is contagious, and immodesty has particularly the worst quality of the plague; 'tis malicious and would infect others. A woman, who knows herself scandalous, thinks she is reproached by the virtue of another, looks

on

on her, as it is said in the book of wisdom, as one "made to reprove her ways;" and in her own defence strives to level the inequality: the more another has of her guilt, the less she fancies she has of it herself; as if the burdening another would ease her own burden. But sin is full of spite; and though ill women put on the most engaging outfaces, when they are contriving the ruin of the innocent, they are malice within, and design nothing but to make them as wretched as themselves. They will by all arts of condescension endeavour to betray a woman of reputation; and if they succeed, if they can but once entangle her in that cobweb, friendship, they then spider-like, infuse their venom, never leave their vile insinuations, until they have poisoned and ruined her. If, on the other hand, they meet with one of too much sagacity to be ensnared; if they cannot taint her innocence, they will endeavour to blast her reputation, represent her to the world, to be what they would have made her, such a one as themselves. On which account there is no conversing with them but with a manifest peril of honour and virtue. It is true, it is not always in one's power to shun the meeting of such persons; they are too numerous and too intruding to be totally avoided, unless, as the apostle says, "one should go out of the world;" but all voluntary converse supposes a choice, which every body that will may refrain, may keep on the utmost frontiers of civility, without suffering any approach towards intimacy and familiarity.

Were this distance only observed it might be of excellent use; a kind of lay excommunication, which might seasonably supply the want of the ecclesiastic, either quite neglected, or generally made use of against offences that are purely civil. And though people are not enjoined to avoid their company in all cases, yet the doing it, as often as it can be done conveniently, is equally a duty and an advantage. This would not only secure the innocent, but would have a good effect on the guilty, who would be ashamed to be thus singled out and

and discriminated; whereas while they are suffered mix with the best societies, like hunted deer in a h— they flatter themselves they are undiscernible. And the advantages of this course is yet more extensive, would reach the whole sex, which now seems to lie under a general scandal for the fault of particular persons. A considerable number of smutty ears cast a blackness on the whole field, which yet, were they apart, would perhaps not fill a small corner of it: and in this unchristian age things are apt to be denominated, not from the greater but worse part; whereas were the good severed from the bad by some note of distinction, there might then a more certain estimate be made; and whatever malice of man may pretend, it is not to be doubted, the scandalous part of the sex would then make but a small shew, which now makes so great a noise. The vanity of some men, the ill-nature of others, the enmity of some women, the malice of others, have done the worst, in endeavouring to lessen the credit of that sex which having fewer opportunities, fewer temptations to sin, has always been most eminent for religion and virtue. The best way for women of honour to vindicate it, is to make their own virtues as illustrious as they can, and by the bright shining of that, draw off mens eyes from the worst prospect. To this, not only innocence but prudence is requisite, “to abstain,” as from all that “so from the appearance of it too.”

Many women have acquired as ill characters by their indiscretion only, as others by their incontinence. It is as bad with respect to the world to appear wicked as to be really so. She who values not the virtue of modesty in her words and dress, will not be thought to set much price upon it in her actions; and though she may feel her consciousness of her own abstinence is sufficient, it is as much an offence to the virtuous as the act itself, and as much to be avoided.

Chaste and wise women will not give the least occasion for censure: they cut off all occasion from th

that desire occasion; they deny themselves the most innocent liberties, if they are attended with the least suspicion of offence; and no caution is perhaps severe enough to secure us against the malicious and the jealous, though it is possible some black mouth may asperse them, yet they have still Plato's reserve, who being told of some that defamed him, "It is no matter, said he, I will live so that none shall believe them." If their lives be such that they may acquit themselves to the sober and unprejudiced, they have all the security that can be aspired to in this world; the more evincing attestation they must attend from the unerring tribunal in the other, where there lies a certain appeal for all injured persons who can calmly wait for it.

Modesty may be farther considered as it is a branch of sobriety, and is to chastity, temperance, and humility, as the fringes are to a garment; nor is it to be regarded as any thing less than divine grace moderating an over-active and curious mind, and guiding the passions; it is directly opposite to whatever is bold and indelcent, and in an especial manner to curiosity.

How then do they err against this virtue, who search into the secrets of the Almighty, whose curiosity intrudes into the counsels of heaven, who censure the ways of Providence, and not satisfied with the laws of God proclaimed to all the world, require new laws for themselves, and for want of a new table are their own legislators.

It is a hard and disagreeable task to study and know one's self: who has modesty enough to acquaint himself with his infirmities? Who is humble enough to be content with his station, and not aspire to be let into the Arcana of government? Indeed those who would exclude all men from concerning themselves with the mysteries of state, unless they are called to it, give one reason to fear they are like those jugglers, who will not let those that come to see them approach too near, lest they should discover their tricks, and the mystery end all in knavery. But to be always prying into secrets of kings and princes

is a folly and a fault, in such as are not made use of in the conduct of them : indeed all men are, in some measure, allowed to be solicitous about it; government is for the good of the people, and as their happiness or misery depend upon the good or ill ministry of it, a modest concern for it is very allowable; but to extend one's curiosity to things we are not capable of knowing or influencing, and that with a presumption and uneasiness unbecoming our duty and station, is an error that we should endeavour to correct, and do the same when it is employed in lower affairs if they do not belong to us. A busy-body must be impudent; he that meddles unasked with other mens matters, unless with charitable intentions, will hardly ever trouble himself, when there is need of his charity. Such officious neighbours are their greatest nuisance; the itch of knowing keeps them always uneasy, and therefore they will never let any body else be at ease. Another kind of immodesty, very troublesome and unneighbourly, is that of hearkening at people's doors and windows; it is invading your neighbour's privacy; it lays that open which he would have had inclosed, and is as dangerous as it is indecent.

If we aim to be good for another world as well as this, we must not content ourselves with considering what would make us agreeable to men only, but what would make us pleasing in the sight of God; and our considerations should have an eye to that in whatever we do. Wherefore let not the reader think us tedious or impertinent, when we spiritualize worldly things, and do our endeavours to make them useful towards those that are heavenly.

Every man has sins enough in his own life: every man has his share of trouble, and evils enough in his own fortune; and as to the performance of his duty he will find, upon examining himself, enow of omissions and errors to entertain his enquiry; for which reasons, curiosity after the affairs of others cannot be without envy and an evil mind. What is it to me if my neighbour's

Bour's grandfather was a Jew, or his grandmother illegitimate? If this man owe money, has a great many creditors, and that a great many parasites? But commonly busy-bodies, are not inquisitive into mens virtues and excellencies, into the beauty and order of a well-governed family; if there be any thing shameful in manners, or private in nature, any thing that blushes to see the light, their care and business is to discover it. Was our curiosity to be satisfied with great things, the course of the earth, the moon, and the other planets, the numberless worlds in the great expanse, the ebbing and flowing of the sea, the wonderful formation of man, and of animals from an elephant to a fly, the creatures invisible to sight until they are swelled up by the glass, those crawling on the superficies of fruit; all less to the eye than a point; as this globe of ours is less to the sun-lands, which with all our advantages of telescopes leave not to us the magnitude of a speck.

Nothing in nature discovers more wonders to the curious than anatomical enquiries. "Man is wonderfully made," says the royal prophet, and those that have searched deeply into his make know that he is wonderfully supported. Life hangs by a thousand slender threads, a thousand channels must the blood flow through, and the least stop in either stagnates the whole, and puts an end to its being. Nor are such enquiries confined to any one order of men, to any one family or profession, to the one sex or the other, but are useful and entertaining to all those whose curious minds are always in action, and for want of nobler objects descend to scandal and impertinence, and impudently thrust themselves into their neighbours counsels. The contemplation of the great works of God will necessarily induce us to have a most sublime idea of his being, and a mean one not only of our fellow-creatures, but of ourselves, and make us delight in searching after the fountain of truth. How impudent is it in us created beings, to put ourselves in the places of the Creator, and, as if we had

had formed ourselves, rob him of the glory of his creation. Those who dare presume to deny the being of God hardly indeed deserve that it should be demonstrated to them, or at least that they should be argued with more seriousness than one argues with people we take to be stupid, and incapable of conviction or reason. They are for the generality so ignorant, it makes them unqualified for the understanding of the clearest principles, and of the truest and most natural inferences. They insolently demand to have every thing tried by the standard of their sense, and with a span would measure the immeasurable extent of the universe. For such is the vast disproportion between finite understanding, and the infinite power and wisdom of the Almighty Creator.

Let us consider only with ourselves. Some years ago we were not, ~~we were not, we were not~~ it is in our power even to be more than now that we are it is in our power even to be from being. Our existence therefore, has had its beginning, and is now continued by the influence of something which is without us, which will subsist after which is better and more powerful than we. Now that something is not God, let us but know what it is.

But if such searches as these be too sublime, if a man must be led by sense, and work always upon matter, his inquisitiveness goes no farther than his eyes can at least takes no delight in diving into those effects, causes of which are not seen, let him first study the stars, and the orbs rolling about the universe: I can better tempt your curiosity to turn to sublime and difficult things, the contemplation of which may enlarge the soul, than by borrowing the ideas of a famous French author, on this subject, with some convenient variations. Observe this spot of ground on which you tread for neatness and ornament it exceeds the other lands about it. Here a walk of curious greens, intermixed with arches of hollies of various kinds, and there a shady grove traversed with allies, whose borders

fringe

fringed with flowers; here behold a river cutting its crooked course through most pleasant fields, and gliding gently under a long parterre, as green as the opening spring, and as even as the new mowed meadow. On the margin see rows of trees hanging their spreading branches over the murmuring waters; behold, on the other hand, long vistas extending to a spacious forest, where, after it has travelled through the greatest order, the eye is lost in woods and wilds. Look round and see a noble seat, the elegance and situation of which please alike both the fancy and judgment; and from thence carry your eye over a charming variety of hills and dales, woods and edifices, till it is bounded by the horizon. Will you say, this lovely spot, this garden, and this mansion, are the effects of chance? Will you suppose that all these things meet together accidentally? No certainly, you will rather commend the order, the disposition of them, the judgment and fancy of the ingenious contriver. My thoughts would be the same with yours, and I should immediately suppose it to be the dwelling of some person of fortune and magnificence, who had spared for neither cost nor art to make it worthy the generous owner. Yet what is this piece of ground so ordered, and on the beautifying of which all the art of the most skilful workmen has been employed; if the whole earth is but an atom hanging in the air? Hear then how my author improves this imagination.

You are placed on some part of this atom; you must needs be very little, since you hold there so little room; yet you have eyes imperceptible, like two points. Open them, however, towards heaven. What is sometimes the object of your observations there? Is it the moon when at the full? It is radiant then, and very beautiful; though all its light be but the reflexion of the sun's, it appears as large as the sun itself, larger than the other planets, than any of the stars. But be not deceived by outward appearance, nothing in heaven is so little as the moon: the extent of its superficies exceeds not the thirteenth

teenth part, its solidity not the eight and fortieth, diameter, which is two thousand two hundred and miles, not a quarter part of that of the earth. A truth is, that what makes it so great in appearance is proximity only; its distance from us being no than thirty times the diameter of the earth, or hundred thousand miles. Its course is nothing in comparison of the prodigious long race of the sun, is certain, it runs not above sixteen hundred and thousand miles a day, which is not above six thousand five hundred miles an hour, or one thousand one hundred and twenty five miles in a minute; yet to complete this course, it must run five thousand and six hundred times faster than a race-horse that runs twelve miles an hour: it must be eighty times faster than the sound of a cannon, or of thunder, which runs eight hundred and one and thirty miles an hour. The author builds here on the old Ptolemean system of the motion of the sun, which I do not think fit to follow with him here: for whether the earth or the sun move, the prodigious swiftness of the motion will be astonishing. He proceeds: but if you will oppose the motion of the sun, with respect to its greatness, its distance, or its course, you will find there is no comparison made between them: remember only, that the diameter of the earth is nine thousand miles, that of the sun is a hundred times as large, which is nine hundred thousand miles. Now if this be the breadth of it even, judge you what its superficies, what its solidity is. Do you apprehend the vastness of its extent, and imagine a million of such globes as the earth being laid to it would not exceed the sun in bigness? How great you cry then, must the distance of it be, if you judge of it by its smallness in appearance? It is prodigious great; it is demonstrated, that the distance from the earth can be no less than ten thousand times the earth's diameter, or ninety millions of miles; and it may be four times, perhaps six times, perhaps

as much, for aught we know; there is no method found out for the computing it.

Now for the help of your apprehension, let us suppose a mill-stone falling from the sun upon the earth; let it come down with all the swiftness imaginable; and even faster than the fall of the heaviest bodies, from places so high. Let us suppose also, that it preserves always the same swiftness, without acquiring a greater, or losing from that it has already; that it advances forty fathoms every second, which is half the height of the high-steeple, and consequently, two thousand four hundred fathoms in a minute, allow it to be two thousand six hundred and forty yards, which is an mile and an half; its fall will be three miles in two minutes, ninety miles in an hour, and two thousand one hundred and sixty miles in a day. Now it must fall ninety millions of miles before it comes down to the earth, which will make it forty one thousand six hundred and sixty six days, above one hundred and forty years in performing this journey. This is not all that is prodigious in the heavens, the distance of Saturn from the earth is at least ten times as much as the sun's, no less than nine hundred thousand millions of fathoms; and this stone would be above eleven hundred and forty years in its fall from Saturn to the earth.

By this elevation of Saturn's, raise your imagination as high, if you can, as to conceive the immensity of its circuit. The circle which Saturn describes, has above eighteen hundred millions of miles diameter, and consequently above five thousand four hundred millions of miles circumference; so that a race-horse which I suppose to run thirty miles an hour, must be twenty thousand five hundred and forty eight years in taking the round.

Much more is still to be said on the miracles of this mutable world, or to speak in the phrase of the atheists, the wonders of chance, which they allow to be the cause of all things. It is still more wonderful in its operations than they imagine. Learn what chance

is, or rather be instructed in the knowledge of the power of our God.

Do you know that this distance of the sun from the earth, which is ninety millions of miles, and that of Saturn, which is nine hundred millions of miles, are so inconsiderable, if opposed to that of the other stars, that no comparison can express the true measure of the latter? For, indeed, what proportion is there between any thing that can be measured, let its extent be what it will, and that which it is impossible to measure? If the height of a star cannot be known, it is, if I may so speak, immeasurable. All angles, sinus's and paralaxes become useless, if one goes about to compute it; and should one man observe a fixed star from London, and another from Japan, the two lines that should reach from their eyes to that star, would make no angle at all, and would be confounded together in one and the same line, so inconsiderable is the space of the whole earth, in comparison of that distance. If two astronomers should stand, the one on the earth, and the other in the sun, and from thence should observe one star at the same time, the two visual rays of these two astronomers would not in appearance form an angle. To conceive the same thing another way; suppose a man placed on one of the stars, this sun, this earth, and the ninety millions of miles, between them, would seem to him but as one point, of which there are demonstrations given; for this reason, the distance between any two stars is not to be measured, as near as they appear to one another; you would think, if you judged by your eye, the Pleiades almost touch one another: there is a star seems to be placed on one of those which make the tail of the great bear; your sight can hardly perceive that part of the heavens which divides them; they make together as it were but one double star: yet if the most skilful astronomers cannot with all their art find out their distance from each other, how far asunder must two stars be which appear remote? And how much further yet from one
another

the two polar stars? Oh miracle! Oh prodigy! in the power of numbers to describe it; and it that numbers cannot perform? The imagination is lost in this tremendous expanse: man's curiosity sinks in amaze; and the soul naturally flies to the Creator of the heavens and the earth, as to the cause of these terrifying wonders.

And again, the earth on which we tread, hangs like a grain of sand in the air; a multitude of fiery wheels whose bigness and height exceed the reach of vision, are perpetually rolling around it, crossing the immense spaces of the heavens, or according to the Copernican system, the earth itself turns round, which is the centre of the universe, with a motion which surpasses imagination. Methinks I see the motion of all these globes, the regular march of these celestial bodies; they never disorder, never hit, never touch another. Should but the least of them happen to be deranged, and run against the earth, what must become of the earth? In the contrary, all keep their respective stations, in the order prescribed to them, and follow the course which they have already rolled above six thousand years. What a strange and wonderful effect of divine power!

Be ye confounded, ye unbelievers, and see if intelligence could have done any thing beyond this. Is it chance? Is it a body? Is it a spirit? Is it a being which you distinguish from all other beings which have a particular existence, or which resides in any place? Or, is it not a mode, a fashion of a being? When a stone runs against a stone, we are apt to say it is a collision; but is it anything more than the accidental butting of these bodies one against another? If by this collision or this hitting the bowl, it changes its straight motion to an oblique one; if its direct motion becomes deflected, if ceasing from rolling on its axis it begins to whirl like a top; shall I from thence infer that the motion in general proceeds in this bowl from the collision? Shall I not rather suppose, that the bowl owes

A bit of any thing which is mouldy, tho' no bigger than a grain of sand, appears, thro' a microscope, like a heap of many plants, of which some are plainly seen to bear flowers and other fruits; some are buds only, and others are withered. How extremely small must be the roots and fibres thro' which these little plants receive their nourishment? And if one considers, that these plants bear their own seed as well as oaks or pines, or that these small animals are multiplied by generation, as well as elephants and whales, whither will not such observations lead one? Who could work all these things which are so fine, so exceeding small, that no one can perceive them; and that they, as well as the heavens border upon infinity itself.

Such curious enquiries into the wonders of the creation are apt to cause scepticism in weak minds, but surely without any reason; the heavens, and all that is contained in them, are not to be compared in nobleness and dignity with one of the meanest men upon earth. There can be no other proportion between them than what there is between matter, which is destitute of sentiment, and is only an extent according to three dimensions, and a spiritual, reasonable, or intelligent being. The whole universe, if it be made for man, is, in a literal sense, the least thing that God has done for him; the proof of which may be drawn from religion. Man therefore is neither presumptuous nor vain, when submitting to the evidence of truth, he owns the advantages he has received; and might be taxed with blindness and stupidity, did he refuse to yield himself convinced thro' the multitude of proofs which religion lays before him, to shew him the greatness of his prerogative, the certainty of his refuge, the reasonableness of his hopes, and to teach him what he is, and what he may be.

Some people, whose curiosity affects more to puzzle themselves and others, than to convince, object, that the moon is inhabited; and what is the consequence, if it is so? If from the searches you have made into the

know that we are so ; we have proofs, demonstrations and convictions for all that we are to believe and ourselves. Let the nations who inhabit the celestial globes, whatever these nations are, be mind their own concerns ; they have their cares, we have ours. You have observed the moon, you have found its spots, its deeps, its ruggedness, its motion, its extent, its course, its Eclipses : Let us see that no Astronomer has done more : Contrive new and more exact instruments ; observe it again whether it is inhabited, what are its inhabitants, whether they are like men or whether they are not men : Let me look after you, and let us both be convinced, that there are men who inhabit the moon, then we will consider whether those men are Christians or no, and whether God has made them share our favours with us.

As many millions of years as can be comprehended within the limits of time, are but an instant compared with the duration of God, who is eternal. The motions of the whole universe, are but the point of an arrow being compared with his immensity. What comparison can there indeed be between finite, and infinite ? What is a man's life, or the extent of a grain of sand which is called the earth ? What the small part

nderstanding, presumes to discover the eternal of the Creator, whose power and glory appear in all things.

searches of curious and humble minds into nature, more and more confirm him in holy admiration of greatness and goodness of God. There are no weak as to be incapable of these meditations ; sense every where offer objects to mankind, as often as they see, they must account for them providence. Tell me why this turf brings forth this year, and a plantane the next ? Why the ears his seed in his heart, and wheat bears it ear ? Why a graft taking nourishment from a stock shall have fruit more noble than its nurse parent ? Why the best oil is at the top, the best in the middle, the best honey at the bottom ? But innocent inquiries are not what please the over-indulgent and busy-bodies ; they delight in tragedies, and of crimes and misfortunes ; for which reason a prelate of our church has said, " envy and idleness married together, and begot curiosity," which is continence of the mind. Adultery itself is often but a curious inquisition after and envying of another's happiness. Many have refused fairer objects to the possession of women, purely because they were by others. Such inquisitions are seldom without sin, never without baseness ; they are neither just, honest, nor delightful, and very frequently useless to the curious inquirer. For men stand upon their guard against them, as they secure their meat against vermin, and all their counsels and secrets out of the way.

Let us now consider acts of modesty, as opposed to curiosity, and especially with respect to religion and honour. I do not to feed curiosity by explaining the different degrees of modesty, but to expose the wickedness of boldness and excite men to reform the errors they have committed against this virtue. To the end we should always have about us such impressions of reverence and fear of

and our weakness. He who is merry in a storm or rallies the roaring of thunder, regards not what he speaks to the whole earth, but is possessed with a modesty. It is not the knowledge of the nature that is sufficient to excuse his temerity; for if he knows the causes, he knows also the terrible effects ought to make him serious and modest.

The virtue we are treating of teaches us to be silent and reserved in the presence of our superiors to all, according to their quality, their titles of office. We are not to judge of the merit of those that enjoy titles, nor by what means they acquired them. Our partial judgments would diminish our respect for honours and titles; and if we let our passions rule us, we should never keep within the bounds of modesty but set ourselves on a level, and perhaps above those whom we owe respect and reverence. Let us be forward in speaking, let our answers be pertinent, especially let us not interrupt others, than which gives greater offence in conversation. Present the fairest side of your discourse and temper to truth, and if you have rashly said that which is true, do not justify it; confess your fault, ask pardon and make amends. Never boast of sin, but at least veil on your nakedness, that you may have time for the working of repentance, to believe your sin to be your own. He who blushes not at his crimes, but adds insult to his guilt, has no instrument left to restore his hopes of virtue. Be not confident and positive in doubtful matters, report things modestly and temperately, pretend not to more knowledge than you have, be content to seem ignorant when you are so, or ex-

ate of ignorance and confidence, to be despised and avoided. As there is modesty opposed to boldness, so is there opposed to indecency, which should be observed in all acts of worship with more than common care. Use reverend postures at your devotions, and great attention ; be careful however that you do not content yourself with outward ceremony, and not humble your mind as well as your body. People, who lay great stress on bodily postures and gestures, do rarely find their souls affected as they ought to be ; the mind, when it is truly touched with motions of piety, will naturally shew itself with lowliness and humility ; conscious that it is in the presence of a God whom it is always offending, and from whom none of its secret offences are concealed. But those who bow with their body, while their soul is exulting with the pride of its innocence, or rather revelling with ideas of wordly enjoyments ; who mind not what they are about, but as soldiers do at exercise, and move not but as they are enjoined by discipline, or prompted by custom : to such too much ceremony will be a rock on which they will be sure to split, by giving all to the form, and nothing to the power of godliness.

As to our behaviour towards man, we should in all public meetings, private addresses, in discourses, in journeys, use the forms of salutation, reverence, and decency, which custom prescribes, and is usual among sober persons. Our enthusiasts, who abuse the Holy Spirit by imputing their enthusiasms to its divine impulse, err, in this as in dress ; and when one may by all their other actions observe their hearts are full of pride, affect a rudeness which is as ridiculous as it is unmannerly ; they will not give honour, but they will take it ; and as much as they are for levelling all that are above them, they expect distance and reverence from all that are below. This is humour, if not pride, and is indeed consistent with the rest of their religion, which is all confusion and extravagance.

Modest people will, in all cases of question concerning civil precedence, give it to any one that will take it. How very foolish is it in those that serve at the altar, to suffer this affectation of preference to prevail in themselves, or their relations? The highest seat in the synagogue, the first place at a feast, and all such precedence, is what others would and ought to be willing to yield to them, out of deference to the dignity of their office; but when it is insisted upon with heat, and the least failure in a man's conduct on this account resented so as to be remarkable and troublesome, it loses at once all the reverence that was their due, which ceases to be a debt when demanded. Humility is the distinguishing character of God's servants, and particularly of those that are more immediately employed in his service: not a poverty of spirit, not a slavish compliance with the wills of others, but a holy subjection to that of God, and a consciousness of our own insufficiency.

Another rule of modesty, as it has respect to decency, is to observe seasons. Not to mourn at a wedding, nor laugh at a funeral, but "to rejoice with them that rejoice, and weep with them that weep."

All wanton and dissolute laughter, petulant and uncomely jests, loud talking, jeering, and all such actions; which are call'd incivilities in manners, are offences also against Christian modesty. A dutiful and humble carriage towards parents is enjoined by the laws of God; and a meek complaisant behaviour towards our relations and friends, will increase the number of the latter, and endear us to them as much as the highest obligations.

Observe all those things that are of good report, and are parts of public honesty; for public fame, and the sentence of prudent persons is the measure of good and evil in things indifferent. It is against modesty for a woman to marry a second husband while she is teeming by the first; or to admit a second love while her funeral tears are not wiped from her cheeks. It is against

lic honesty to do some lawful actions of privat,
publ

in our language, and with some
of various, even, feelings and opinions as they
make a meeting with their text: Therefore the
insinuation with relation to the crown of the head
draws away the power of her modelling ornaments
she must finally be avoided, which turns our
beyond our appearance. As this should produce
and speculation, misnomer, plays, clamors, and
which concern us not, and we besides our social
moral interest. Our ladies should not, the
girls, wander into markets and the streets for
employment; but when they are sent forth
to return quickly with their minds, and be
modestly at home under their parents' roof and
care.

all persons be curious in observing and
themselves, in the knowledge of the world
and such as are in their power, and in their
They offend against the rule, and in their
or pry into other people's secrets, and in their
affairs, or where there is an opportunity to
do so. A miracle is said to have been wrought
the body of Epiphany, and in the year of 1717
the body of an unchristian, who had been
a charitable person, and who had been
and had been the subject of many

the welfare of our immortal souls depends upon them. These considerations on common life may be reckoned too ludicrous for the solemn meditations of Christians; but when we reflect how much Christian life is influenced by common life, we shall find there are no moral acts so trivial as not to be worth our informing ourselves of their guilt or their innocence, to regulate ourselves accordingly in practising or avoiding them.



M E E K N E S S.

THOUGH meekness is in the main more a feminine virtue than a masculine, yet we must consider it with respect to both sexes; the practice of all virtues being alike the duty of both.

Nature, which abhors every thing that is monstrous and disproportionate, teaches us that meekness is a property of women, whom she has made with a more smooth and soft composition of body, and intends doubtless, that the mind should correspond with it. Though art can represent in the same face beauty in one position, and deformity in another; yet nature is more sincere, and never meant a serene clear forehead should be the frontispiece to a cloudy tempestuous heart. It is therefore to be wished, the softer sex would take the admonition, and, while they consult their glasses, whether to applaud or improve their outward form, they would cast one look inwards, and examine what symmetry is there held with a fair outside; whether any storm of passion darkens and overcasts their exterior beauty; and use at least an equal diligence to rescue that, as they would to clear their face from any stain or blemish.

We have seen already, "that a meek and quiet spirit" the characteristic of a Christian woman given by scripture; and it must be so to all that will not enter into dispute with God, and contest his judgment, who has, by apostle, declared it to be of "great price in his sight."

Meekness, though it be a single entire virtue in itself, it is diversified according to the several faculties of soul, over which it has influence; for there is a meekness of the understanding, a meekness of the will, and a meekness of the affections; all which must concur to make up the "meek and quiet spirit."

The meekness of the understanding consists in a pliancy to conviction; and is directly opposite to that obstinate adherence to their own opinion, observable in many, who judge of tenets, not by conformity to truth and reason, but to their prepossessions and prejudices, acquired generally by education and conversation; not to mention the accidental biases of passion and interest: Thence comes bigotry, and the furious fiery spirit of persecution, whose origin must be from hell, the devil being father of pride, the eternal opposite to meekness. This prepossession puts people on the chance of lottery; what they first happen to draw determines them merely on the privilege of its precedence: Had Rome first seized them, his tenure would have been indefeasible as Christ's now is. How great the force of such prejudices is, we may see by the opposition it offered against Christian doctrine in gross at its first propagation. The blind zeal of the Jews for the traditions of their fathers, engaging them in the murder of that very Messiah whom those traditions had taught them to expect; and afterwards of persecuting disciples and followers. Which blind zeal did in the same age flame out in the female sex particularly: They stirred up the "devout and honourable women, &c. raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas." They, being the weaker as well as the softer sex, have in all ages been the most subject to take violent prejudices of

Education ; and they should therefore see their way well before they run too fierce a career in it: Otherwise the greatest heat without light does but resemble that of the bottomless pit, where flames and darkness do at once cohabit. How many instances of this blind prepossession do we meet with in our time, of notions embraced for the sake of ancestry, and tenets adhered to, because they were in vogue in the times of great grandfathers ? With what rage have the interests of the most vile and worthless persons been espoused, purely because they declare their principles are the same they were bred in ?

What extravagances have not great ladies been guilty of to vindicate these prejudices ; and where of late does the spirit of meekness reign ? not that men or women should be too easy and flexible, like wax ready to take any impression ; this temper is of equal, if not more ill consequence than the former. The adhering to one opinion can expose but to one error ; but a mind that lies open to the fluxes of new tenets, may incessantly entertain a whole ocean of delusions. To be thus yielding is not a meekness, but a slavishness of understanding : It is so great a meekness of mind, that the apostle sinks it somewhat below the impotence of women, and resembles it to that of children ; yet it seems the folly of some women resembled that of children in this matter, “ ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.” A description which if we compare with our own Times, we must think prophetic. How many women have we seen led captive, being affected with the novelty, or seduced by the pretended zeal of a new teacher, to whom they have given up their understandings, and for a while this strong man has kept possession ? but when a stronger than he has come, it has fared as with him in the gospel ; a louder zeal, a newer doctrine, soon divides his spoils, and that by force of the very same principle on which he set up, which in a while determines the latter
also ;

also ; and so on, till the poor profelyte has been hurried through all the mazes of wild error. When the Quaker Naylor first vented his blasphemies, his followers were most of the female sex ; it was the women that run after him, crying Hosanna, and strewing his way into the city with flowers. When of latter days, Mason preached his whimsies to the people, the crowds that gathered about him were mostly of the same sex ; and how many of them did the raving inspirations of the modern prophets deceive ? not to mention their political frenzies ; all which should make them equally watchful, against being too tenacious of old tenets, or too susceptible of new. Some womens opinions are like the palate, distracted by too much variety : and they at last fix upon what at first they most decried. Some have set out in the fiercest detestation of popery, and have wandered so long, like the blinded Syrians, that they have at last found themselves in the midst of Samaria ; being brought by an insensible circular motion to that religion, from which alone they designed to fly ; so little do itching ears know whither they may be carried. Women, as they are thought more liable to seducement than men, are more particularly aimed at by seducers : For as he who is to put off adulterated wares will choose the most unwary chapman, so these sophisticators of divinity desire the most undiscerning auditors. That so many of the sex are so, must not be imputed to any natural defect, but to the loose notions they have of religion ; of which they have perhaps some general confused ideas, but have so little penetrated the depth of it, that they know not why they are Christians, rather than Turks, why of the church of England, rather than that of Rome ; and while they are thus unfixed, and have no better principle than custom and compliance, they have nothing to answer to any the grossest deceit that can be obtruded upon them ; which for aught they know, or have considered, may be as true as any thing they have formerly profest. Now, when any one in this condition shall
be

be assaulted, not only by the repeated importunities of false teachers, but also by the threatnings of hell and damnation, he is like one awaked by the outcry of fire, and in that amaze will be apt to run where ever the first cry of her danger shall lead her.

is, the antidote against the poison of new doctrines, is, to know well the grounds of the old, and then the will not be carried about by every wind, as St. Paul says, Tit. 1. The standard of truth is the Scripture, a sure and infallible guide. If men and

they will, with seriousness and humility, in the risk of deviating into error, since there is no authority on one side, and they would not be aw'd by power, whee they are, persuasion; they would weigh every thing in the balance, and by that rule govern their faith and manners.

Meekness of will lies in its just subordination to the will of God in divine things; in natural or moral, to right reason; and in human constitutions to the command of superiors; and so long as the will governs itself by these in their respective orders, it transgresses not the meekness required of it. But experience shews, that the will is now, in its depravation, an imperious faculty, apt to cast off that subjection to which it was design'd, and act independently from those motives which should influence it. This, God knows, is too common in all ages, all constitutions and sexes; but the feminine lies more especially under an ill name for it; whether it has grown from the low opinion conceived of their reason, less able to maintain its empire, or from the multiplied habitual instances themselves have given of unruly wills, I shall not undertake to determine; but be it the one or the other, it is, I am sure, so great a reproach, as they should be very industrious to clear themselves of. Nothing will prompt them to do this, more than considering rightly the happiness as well as virtue, of a governable will. How can

do those glide with it through all, even the roughest events, who can master that stubborn faculty? How does a will resigned to God enervate and enfeeble any calamity? Indeed it triumphs over it, and by that conjunction with him that ordains it, may be said to command even what it suffers; and proportionable, though not equal to this, is the happiness of a will regulated by reason of things within its sphere. It is the dignity of human nature, which distinguishes it from that of the beasts; the more contemptible themselves in their kinds, the farther they are removed from it. The stupidity of an ass has rendered it proverbial for folly, when the tractableness of other animals has tempted some to allow them to be rational. Besides, reason affords something of a basis for the will to bottom on. He who governs himself by reason, that being still the same, will act equally and consonant to himself; but he who does a thing this moment, only because he will, may the next have as mighty an argument to do the quite contrary, and so spend his whole time in unravelling his spider webs, as the prophet Isaiah rightly calls the vain designs of such brutish men. An ungovernable will is the most precipitous thing imaginable, and like the Devil in the swine, hurries headlong to destruction, depriving one of that poor reserve, that faint comfort of the miserable, pity, which will not be so much invited by the misery, as averted by that wilfulness which caused it. So little can such persons expect the compassion of others, that it will be hard for them to afford themselves their own. The consciousness that their calamities are the effects of their perverseness, being apt to dispose them to hate that pity; and it is no small accumulation of wretchedness, when a man suffers, not only directly, but on the rebound too. It re-inflicts his miseries upon himself, by a grating reflexion upon his own madness. So great an aggravation is it, that even hell itself is enhanced and completed by it; all the Torments there being sharpened by the woful remembrance, that they might once have been avoided. **A**

A will duly submissive to lawful superiors, is only an amiable thing in the eyes of others, but exceedingly happy to one's self. It is the parent of peace and order, both public and private. A blessing so considerable, as is very cheaply bought by a little receding from one's own will or humour; whereas the contrary temper is the spring and original of infinite confusions; a grand incendiary, which puts kingdoms, churches, families in combustion; a contradiction, not only to the world, but to the works of God; a kind of a creative power, which reduces things to the chaos from whence God drew them. Many are the instances of rage which age has given us of its mischievous effects, which serve to enhance the value of a governable malleable temper. And as a will thus resigned to reason and just authority, is a felicity all rational creatures should aspire to: so especially the female sex, whose passion being naturally the more impetuous, ought to be most strictly guarded, and kept under the severe discipline of reason; for where it is otherwise, where a woman has no guide but her will, and her will nothing but her humour, the event is sure to be fatal to herself, and often to others also.

Though a great part of these reflections are particularly address'd to the ladies, they are tacitly intended to men also. There is no vice which does not effect both sexes, and no good counsel that will not be beneficial to both, if it is followed. But women, though they are not inferior to men in virtue, and perhaps are the more innocent of the two sexes, having not so many opportunities to improve themselves as men by reading, should find in what they read the more lessons for their improvement.

The other restraint of the will, obedience to superiors, is a very happy imposition, though perhaps it is not always thought so; for those who resist the government of reason, are not very apt to submit to that of authority. God and nature do attest the expediency of it.

to women, by having placed that sex in a degree of inferiority to the other; there are but three states of life through which they can regularly pass, virginity, marriage and widowhood; two of them are states of subjection, the first to the parent, the second to the husband; and the third, as it is casual whether they can arrive to it or no, so if they do, we find it by God himself reckoned as a condition the most desolate and deplorable. If I should say this happens upon that very score that they are left to their own guidance, the sad wrecks of many would too much justify the gloss; but it shews however, that God sets not the same value upon their being masterless, which some of them do, while he reckons them most miserable when they are most at liberty. The subordination of their sex being God's own law, there needs no other argument to prove its fitness, and to urge their obedience; when they oppose it, the contumacy flies higher than the immediate superior, and reaches God himself. Many of that timorous sex would not surely dare so far, were it not for some false punctilios of honour, which, like our duellists, they have imposed upon themselves. Such ladies look upon meekness and submission as a silly sheepish quality, below women of breeding and spirit; on the contrary, an imperious obstinacy passes for nobleness, and greatness of mind. But alas! they are wofully mistaken in their notion of a great spirit, which consists in scorning to do unworthy and vile things, and boldly encountering the adverse events of life, not in spurning at duty, or seeking to pull themselves from that sphere, where the divine wisdom has placed them. Stubbornness is the mark of a great stomach, not of a great mind; and a man may be as well reckoned brave because he is cruel, as a woman generous because she is ungovernable.

Whatever value the sex may put upon themselves, nothing sinks them more in the esteem of others than imperiousness; it renders a woman a plague to all that have

it serves only to make her more insolent and intolerant her humours then grow to such a height, that she not herself what she would have, and yet expect others should: we may apply to such a one what Hannibal said of Marcellus, "If he was vanquished, he gave rest to himself; nor, if he was victorious to others." Certainly the uneasiness of a perverse mind is so great that could such come but to compare it with the calm and happy serenity of meekness and obedience, it would need no other lecture to commend them to the esteem or practice.

The meekness of affections consists in reducing passions to a temper and calmness, not suffering them to make uproars within to disturb one's self, nor to break out to the disturbance of others. Meekness is generally subservient to this regulation, especially as it is contrary to anger, a two-edged passion; which, while it strikes its blows without, wounds yet more fatally within. The commotion and vexation which an angry man feels, is far more painful than any thing he can easily inflict upon another; herein justifying the proverb usually given to anger, that it is a short madness. Who, that were in his right wits, would incur a great mischief to do a less? It is indeed so great a disorder of the mind, that he who is possessed with it,

desires of a meeker person. Such successes have been a little necessary to fomenting the humour, will give such women little cause of triumph, they consider how odious it makes them, how unhuman society; "better to dwell in a corner of a house than with a brawling woman in a wide house," says the wisest of men: and the son of Sirach, "a loud woman, and a scold, shall be fought out to drive the enemy." Though he taxes the feminine impartially enough, yet there is scarce any of them he more often and more severely brands, than the unquietness. It seems it was a thing generally looked on as very insufferable: when Socrates designed to discipline himself to perfect patience he knew no better of exercise, than to get a shrew to his wife; an experience that may perhaps again recommend a wife when there happens an age of philosophers; but in the present it will be hard for any of our Xantippes to rival a Socrates, and therefore that quality is as destructive to their interests in getting husbands, as it is to the husband's quiet when he is got.

This vice has not that prevalence over women of good breeding, as it has over the vulgar: but they affect a silence, or a complaisance among equals, and among strangers, if we know the character and disposition that they are masters of.

storm, in which no man can be heard to speak from without: if you give gentle advice, you are despised; and if you urge it with vehemence, you provoke it more. It is our duty then to lay up a great store of reason, that, like a besieged town, we may be defended for its assaults, and be defensible from within; we are not likely to be relieved from without. Reason is not to be suppressed but by something that is stronger than itself; of all passions, it endeavours not to make reason useless, and is an universal passion for an infinite object: for none was ever so amorous as to love a toad, none so envious as to repine at the condition of the wretched, no man so timorous as to fear a bee; but anger is troubled at every thing, and every man, and every accident; and if it is not suppressed will make a man's condition restless. When it proceeds from a great cause it turns to fury, from a small cause to peevishness, and thus is either always terrible or ridiculous; it renders the body monstrous and contemned, the voice horrid, the eyes fierce, the face pale and the speech clamorous and loud. It is neither modest nor ingenuous, proceeding from softness of spirit and pusillanimity, which is the cause that women are more subject to it than men, sick persons than the healthy, old more than the young, the unprosperous more

is done for a fault in the cook, or an accident in the butler, for a pullet ill-dressed, or a glass broke, times for the fold of a gown, not placed as it should have been, and other such trifles not worth the derision of reasonable creatures? Anger makes marriage a necessary and unavoidable trouble; it renders friendships, familiarities, and societies intolerable, turns frequently mirth into tragedy, friendship into hatred, a wise man into a fool; he loses himself when he is possessed by anger: it perverts the desire of justice to an itch of railing, justice to cruelty, command to oppression, and power to insolence: it changes discipline into tediousness and hatred of liberal education; it makes a prosperous man to be envied; an unfortunate to be pitied; it is a confluence of all the irregular passions; envy, sorrow, fear, scorn, and prejudice, rashness, self-love and impatience, are in its composition; and though very troublesome to the man who is most so to him that has it. For what a miserable state must that soul be in, which is possessed by many Demons?

In order to cast them out, and purge ourselves from this dreadful possession, let us diligently observe, whether in our desires to suppress anger, we are angry with ourselves for being so; whether we deal with others like physicians, who give a bitter potion, when they intend to eject the bitterness of choler; for this will provoke the person, and increase the passion. We must quietly set upon the mortification of it; we must do it with anger. Be watchful over yourselves the first day, that will be no great trouble to you; add the second day to your watchfulness, it will be more so than the first; and by being thus watchful and diligent, you will make your duty a habit. Anger is only criminal, when it is against charity to one's self, or one's neighbour. Anger against vice is a holy thing, and an effect of love to God and to our neighbour, for whose interest I am passionate, like a person

son concerned. If I take care that my anger make no reflection of scorn or cruelty upon the offender, no pride or violence, or transport to myself, anger becomes charity. When one commended Chalkin, king of Sparta, for a gentle, good and meek person, his colleague said well, "How can he be good, who is an enemy even to vicious persons?"

Besides the remedies which have been already prescribed against this furious passion, this evil spirit which mankind is so apt to be possessed, there are others which religion, and the hopes of everlasting happiness will inspire. Heaven, an eternal scene of contentment and joy, is inconsistent with the rage of a choleric man, and his thoughts can never be erected towards peaceful mansions, when his soul is ruffled and maddened by the fury of an ungovernable passion. Address yourself to God, when this fit is coming upon you, for his divine assistance to overcome it; but it must be in some degree removed, and it is then the most likely to be over before your prayers. An angry man is not fit to appear before the God of mercy. You must not approach great men when you are in a passion; how much more are you to be calm and serene, when you present yourself as a petitioner before the Almighty. The curing of this ill habit will be the effect and fruit of your prayers.

Seal up your lips, and let it not out when it rises in your breast; for, like fire, when it wants fuel it will suppress itself. It is good in a fever to have a tender and smooth tongue, but it is better that it should be in anger; if it be rough and distempered in a fever, it is an ill sign; if so in anger, it is an ill cause. Words fan the fire like wind, and in the passion of anger are like steel and flint, which strike fire by mutual collision. Some men will talk themselves into a passion, and continue till they have also kindled the persons they talk to, and they both flame out with rage and violence.

The most excellent natural cure for anger is humility. He who by daily considering his own infirmities and failings, makes the error of his neighbour or servant to be his own case, and remembers that he daily needs God's pardon, and his brother's charity, will not be apt to fall into passion at the levities, or misfortunes, or indiscretions of another, greater than which, he considers, he is very frequently and more inexcusably guilty of.

Though our Saviour suffered all the contradictions of sinners, and received all affronts and reproaches of malicious, rash, and foolish persons; yet in all of them he was without passion, and gentle as the morning sun in autumn: in this also he propounded himself imitable by us: for if innocence itself suffered so great injuries and disgraces, it is no great matter for us quietly to receive all the calamities of fortune, indiscretion of servants, mistakes of friends, unkindnesses of kindred, and rudenesses of enemies, since we have deserved these and worse, even hell itself.

If we are tempted to anger in the actions of government, and discipline to our inferiors, in which case, anger is permitted so far, as it is prudently instrumental to government, and it is only a sin, when it is excessive and unseasonable, apt to disturb our own discourse, or to express itself in imprudent words, or violent actions: let us propose to ourselves the example of God, the creator and preserver of all things; who at the same time, and with the same tranquillity, decreed heaven and hell, the joys of blessed angels and souls, and the torments of devils and accursed spirits. When at the last day all the world shall burn under his feet, God shall not be at all inflamed, or shake in his essential seat, the centre, of tranquillity and joy. Though the cause of anger should at first seem reasonable, defer to execute it till you may better judge; for as Phocion told the Athenians who upon the first news of the death of Alexander were ready to revolt, “ stay a while, for if the
king

Remove from yourself all provocations and
tives to anger, especially games of chance, and
wagers, pretty curiosities, and carefulness about
ly business: manage yourself with indifference
contempt of these external things, and do not
passion upon them; it is more than they are
they that desire but a few things, can be crossed
a few.

Set not your hearts upon gay and costly r
as glasses, china-ware; nor on weak and
animals, as parrots, Canary-birds, lap-dogs, a
like; the breaking the one, or the neglecting
other, are irresistible causes of furious anger, in
who take too much delight in them. Jewels and
furniture, if damaged or lost, will infallibly
worse effect on such people: so indeed will any
that the soul is set upon, when they meet with
disappointment in it: wherefore our hearts
have more valuable treasures for their objects
sures that are incorruptible, laid up in heaven;
order to the enjoyment of them, let us endeavor
have a calm and quiet "conscience, void of offence
wards God and towards man."

Do not entertain nor suffer tale-bearers; they
your ear first, and then your credulity; they steal

persons, for that prevents the occasions of confusion ; and if we live with prudent persons, they will not easily cause disturbance to us. These things, it is true, are not in many mens power, and are therefore prepared rather as a felicity than a remedy or duty, and an act of prevention rather than of cure.

Be not inquisitive into other mens affairs, nor the faults of your servants, nor the errors of your friends. If your friend was mis-represented to you, as may very well happen, consider what an injustice you do him in suspending your friendship, and being angry without a cause ; use all reasonable discourses to excuse the faults of others, considering there are many circumstances of time, of person, of accident, of inadvertency, of infrequency, of aptness to amend, of sorrow for doing it ; and it is well that we reap any good for the evil that is done or suffered.

Be always passive in contentions, never active, upon the defensive, not the offensive ; and then also give a gentle answer, retrieving the furies and indiscretions of others, by soft compliance : You will find it sink down quietly, like a stone in a bed of moss : whereas anger and violence make the contention loud and long, injurious to both the parties. If anger rise suddenly, restrain it first with consideration, and let it end in a hearty prayer for him that did the real or seeming injury ; the former stops its growth, and the latter quite kills it, making amends for its monstrous and voluntary birth.



C H A R I T Y.

CHARITY is a duty so amiable to God and man, that we find it often enjoined in the Gospel, as if it was to be a distinguishing virtue of Christianity. The new commandment our Saviour gave us, was, 'Love ye one another : ' again, ' By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another.' The command of God speaks more for this duty, than all the arguments of human reason can do, in recommendation of the most human of all virtues. Charity is to be considered as it has relation to the affections and to the actions : In the affections it is a sincere kindness, which disposes us to wish all good to others, in all their capacities, in the same manner that justice obliges us to wish no hurt to any man, in respect either of his soul, his body, his goods, or his credit ; in all of which the first branch of charity binds us to wish all good.

We cannot have the least spark of this virtue, if we do not wish all good to the souls of men, so precious, that our Saviour thought them worth ransoming with his own blood. If we do not thus love one another, we are far from obeying the command of loving as he has loved. It were to be hoped that none who carried himself a soul about him, could be so cruel to that of another man, as not certainly to wish its happiness, did not experience shew us, there are some persons, whose malice is so devilish as to teach even the direct contrary, the wishing the damnation of others. Some there are, who, in any injury or oppression, make it their only comfort
that

The first of these is the fact that the
 second of these is the fact that the
 third of these is the fact that the
 fourth of these is the fact that the
 fifth of these is the fact that the
 sixth of these is the fact that the
 seventh of these is the fact that the
 eighth of these is the fact that the
 ninth of these is the fact that the
 tenth of these is the fact that the
 eleventh of these is the fact that the
 twelfth of these is the fact that the
 thirteenth of these is the fact that the
 fourteenth of these is the fact that the
 fifteenth of these is the fact that the
 sixteenth of these is the fact that the
 seventeenth of these is the fact that the
 eighteenth of these is the fact that the
 nineteenth of these is the fact that the
 twentieth of these is the fact that the
 twenty-first of these is the fact that the
 twenty-second of these is the fact that the
 twenty-third of these is the fact that the
 twenty-fourth of these is the fact that the
 twenty-fifth of these is the fact that the
 twenty-sixth of these is the fact that the
 twenty-seventh of these is the fact that the
 twenty-eighth of these is the fact that the
 twenty-ninth of these is the fact that the
 thirtieth of these is the fact that the
 thirty-first of these is the fact that the
 thirty-second of these is the fact that the
 thirty-third of these is the fact that the
 thirty-fourth of these is the fact that the
 thirty-fifth of these is the fact that the
 thirty-sixth of these is the fact that the
 thirty-seventh of these is the fact that the
 thirty-eighth of these is the fact that the
 thirty-ninth of these is the fact that the
 fortieth of these is the fact that the
 forty-first of these is the fact that the
 forty-second of these is the fact that the
 forty-third of these is the fact that the
 forty-fourth of these is the fact that the
 forty-fifth of these is the fact that the
 forty-sixth of these is the fact that the
 forty-seventh of these is the fact that the
 forty-eighth of these is the fact that the
 forty-ninth of these is the fact that the
 fiftieth of these is the fact that the
 fifty-first of these is the fact that the
 fifty-second of these is the fact that the
 fifty-third of these is the fact that the
 fifty-fourth of these is the fact that the
 fifty-fifth of these is the fact that the
 fifty-sixth of these is the fact that the
 fifty-seventh of these is the fact that the
 fifty-eighth of these is the fact that the
 fifty-ninth of these is the fact that the
 sixtieth of these is the fact that the
 sixty-first of these is the fact that the
 sixty-second of these is the fact that the
 sixty-third of these is the fact that the
 sixty-fourth of these is the fact that the
 sixty-fifth of these is the fact that the
 sixty-sixth of these is the fact that the
 sixty-seventh of these is the fact that the
 sixty-eighth of these is the fact that the
 sixty-ninth of these is the fact that the
 seventieth of these is the fact that the
 seventy-first of these is the fact that the
 seventy-second of these is the fact that the
 seventy-third of these is the fact that the
 seventy-fourth of these is the fact that the
 seventy-fifth of these is the fact that the
 seventy-sixth of these is the fact that the
 seventy-seventh of these is the fact that the
 seventy-eighth of these is the fact that the
 seventy-ninth of these is the fact that the
 eightieth of these is the fact that the
 eighty-first of these is the fact that the
 eighty-second of these is the fact that the
 eighty-third of these is the fact that the
 eighty-fourth of these is the fact that the
 eighty-fifth of these is the fact that the
 eighty-sixth of these is the fact that the
 eighty-seventh of these is the fact that the
 eighty-eighth of these is the fact that the
 eighty-ninth of these is the fact that the
 ninetieth of these is the fact that the
 ninety-first of these is the fact that the
 ninety-second of these is the fact that the
 ninety-third of these is the fact that the
 ninety-fourth of these is the fact that the
 ninety-fifth of these is the fact that the
 ninety-sixth of these is the fact that the
 ninety-seventh of these is the fact that the
 ninety-eighth of these is the fact that the
 ninety-ninth of these is the fact that the
 hundredth of these is the fact that the

it on their behalf, from him whence every good :
fect gift cometh. He cannot be believed to wish
earnest, who will not thus put life and efficacy
his wishes, by forming them into prayers that v
ther be vain nor fruitless. It is St. Paul's exhortation
that prayers and praises " be made for all men." The
fruits of charity are so natural, that it is a delusion to
any man to persuade himself he has it, who cannot
duce them to evidence it by.

A farther excellency of this grace is, that it
the mind from several great and dangerous vices
from envy; " charity envieth not," says the apostle; and
and indeed common reason may confirm this to be true; for
envy is a sorrow at the prosperity of another, which
therefore must needs be directly contrary to that which
of it which is the effect of love. How vainly do
those pretend to charity, who are continually regretting
at every good that happens to others?

It suppresses pride and haughtiness; " charity vaunteth
not itself, is not puffed up," says St. Paul; and when we
find this virtue of love commanded, there humility
join'd with it: " Put on therefore, says the same apostle,
bowels of mercy, kindness, humbleness of mind." And
again, " be kindly affectioned one towards another, in
brotherly love, in honour preferring one another." Humility
naturally flows from charity, Love always sets a
price upon the thing beloved, which is too common
found in self-love, making us think highly of ourselves
that we are much more excellent than others. Therefore
since love placed on ourselves produces pride, let us
divert the course, turn the love on our brethren, and
as surely bring about humility; we shall then see and

those gifts and excellencies of them, which now our pride or our hatred makes us overlook and neglect. We should esteem others better than ourselves, as the same apostle exhorts us; whoever therefore is of so haughty a temper as to vilify and disdain others, may conclude, he has not this charity rooted in his heart.

It is a certain remedy against censoriousness, "charity thinketh no evil," is not apt to put the worst constructions on other mens actions, but on the contrary, "believeth all things, and hopeth all things," as St. Paul tells the Corinthians; by which he means, it is forward to believe and hope the best of all men; our own experience teaches us the same; where we love we see no faults, witness the great blindness we have to our own, and therefore shall certainly not be like to create them where they are not, or to aggravate them beyond their true size and degree. To what then shall we impute these unmerciful censures and rash judgments of others, so frequent among men, but to the want of this charity? These rash judgments, these unmerciful censures, have been more enormous within these few years than ever. Under this black character come those execrable libels that have of late been published against the reputation of the wisest and bravest men of our times: The thirst after scandal has been so furious that nothing can satiate it. The writers of these infamous invectives are such as knew not this virtue of charity, or sin against knowledge, the greatest of all sins. Whatever applause they may have from wicked men for a season, their reward will be hereafter with the rest of the evil doers, in the burning lake, whose fires have no end.

Charity renounces all dissembling and feigned kindness; where this true and real love is, the false and counterfeited lies before it. This is the love we are commanded to have, such as is without dissimulation; indeed, where this is rooted in the heart, there can be no possible use of dissimulation, because this is in truth, all that the false one would seem to be; and so is as far beyond it; as na-

ture is beyond art, may as a divine virtue is beyond sin; of which there are guilty that make professions of friendship to persons, whom, as soon as backs are turned, they either laugh at or do mischief.

Charity casts out all mean and self-interested principles; its temper is so noble and generous, that it does all projectings for gain and advantage; "love seeks her own." What a bold spirit is that then which its love only there where it may fetch in benefit!

Charity clears the heart of all malice and revenge; which is so utterly contrary to it, that it is possible they should both dwell in the same breast. the property of love to hear all things, and hence is this virtue when it raises man so near to divinity to throw off this natural propensity of it to vengeance and to imitate God himself, who forgives them that give others their trespasses? This virtue exercise towards some sort of men, might consist with malice towards others, it being possible for a man that bitterly hate to love another; but the charity of Christians is not to be so limited; it must extend itself to all men, particularly to enemies, or else it is not that divine one commended to us by Christ. The loving of sinners and benefactors, is so low a pitch of it, that the hypocrites and sinners, the very worst of men, were able to attain it; and therefore it is not counted reward to a disciple of Christ; he must sin and shake off the corruption of depraved nature, which is always for receiving evil for evil; whereas Christianity enjoins to receive good for evil. "I say unto you, love your enemies, them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you," was the command of the Lord of God; and whoever does not this, will never be approved by him for a disciple. There is not one precept so repeated in the new testament, as this of charity: "ye kind to one another, tender hearted, forgiving one another." Again, "forbearing one another, and forgiving one another: if any man have a quarrel against any, or

Christ forgave you, so also do ye." And again, "not rendering evil for evil, nor railing for railing, but contrariwise blessing." Is it not prodigiously strange, that men calling themselves Christians, who have the Gospel before them, and do, or may hear it read daily to them, should give so little obedience to precepts so often repeated nay, not only so, but even publicly avow and profess the contrary, as we daily see they do? What is still more prodigious, is, that men who are to teach this law, which the Gospel has so strongly asserted, should give way to bitterness and railing, and at one breath, sink millions of souls by their rash judgments to eternal perdition. Whence comes this fury that rages even in too many pulpits? Is it not the dictate of the spirit of malice, which is the spirit of the devil? Can any thing be a more direct obeying of him? Those that sin in this kind, take his livery on their backs, and proclaim whose servants they are. What ridiculous impudence is it then, for men who have entered themselves of Satan's family, to pretend to be the servants of Christ? Let such know assuredly, that they shall not be owned by him; but, at the great day of account, be turned over to their proper master, to receive their wages in fire and brimstone. God himself "maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain to the just and to the unjust," a most forcible consideration to excite us to this duty of charity. God is the fountain of perfections, and the being like him, is the sum of all we can wish for; the desire to imitate our heavenly father, is the special mark of a child of his. Now this kindness and goodness to enemies, is most eminently remarkable in God, and that not only in respect of his temporal mercies, but chiefly in his spiritual. We are all by our wicked works enemies to him, and the mischief of that enmity would have fallen upon ourselves; God had no motive beside that of his pity to wish a reconciliation; yet so far was he from returning our enmity, when he might have reveng'd himself to our eternal ruin, that

he designs and contrives how he may bring us to be at peace with him. And what were the means he used for effecting this? A degree of mercy and kindness, still infinitely greater; he sent his own son from heaven to work it, and that not only by persuasions, but by sufferings also: He meekly “laid down his life for us enemies;” and if “God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.” How shameful a thing is it for us to retain displeasures against our brethren, when God thus lays by his towards us, and that when we have so highly provoked him?

What a vast difference will appear in the comparison between the offences of our brethren against us, and our sins against God? If we consider the majesty and power of the being against whom we sin, and his infinite goodness towards us; can men, of the same nature with us, though of the highest eminency in the world, be offended by us as we offend God, blessed for ever? What is the power of other men over us, but the gift of God; and are not we, who are his creatures bound to the strictest obedience to this original of all power? All that we enjoy, whether in relation to this life or a better, was, is, and must be derived from him; and it is therefore impossible for us to offend men in such a degree as we daily offend God, our creator, preserver, and benefactor; yet he pardons those that sincerely apply to him by repentance; and shall we not pardon one another? How can those hot spirits that are dazzled by false and fatal notions of honour, reflect upon their duty towards God and man on this article, and run upon the most sanguinary act of revenge? For it will not be an excuse at the great day of account to say, it was the custom of the age and country, the practice of such a profession, I should have lost my commission or my reputation, if I had not committed the murder. The trial before the dreadful tribunal of God, is not to be evaded by such excuses; nor will the blood of our brother be
wiped

wiped off by the soft name of manslaughter: Good God ! is the slaughter of a man so soft a name that it renders the criminal innocent, with respect to the punishment at least ? And the sin is so little in the opinion of such dealers in blood, that they look upon forbearance and charity as absurd and unreasonable ; but since God himself acts it in so much an higher degree, who can, without blasphemy, say, it is unreasonable ? One cannot too often reprove this damnable custom of murdering one another, out of punctilio ; as if hell, the portion of all murderers, was a dream, and the visions of mad brains, the rules that Christians should walk by. Leaving these execrable sinners to God and their own consciences, let us farther consider the virtue of charity, as it is pleasant and desirable in itself.

None can so well judge of its pleasantness as those that have practised it: The nature of earthly pleasures being such, that it is the enjoyment only which can make a man truly know them ; how unjust, how foolish is it to pronounce ill of a thing before Trial ? Those that have tried it, have tasted the sweets of this divine grace, and are always longing after opportunities to taste them again ; those that have not tried it, may discern it to be lovely at a distance ; if by no other way, by comparing it at least with the uneasiness of its contrary. Malice and revenge are the most restless tormenting passions which can possess the mind of man ; they keep man in perpetual study and care how to effect their mischievous purposes. “ They sleep not unless they have done mischief, except they cause some to fall.” It imbitters all the good things they enjoy, so that they have no relish of them. We have a remarkable instance of that in Haman, who, tho’ he abounded in all the greatness and felicity of the world, yet his malice to a poor foreigner, Mordecai, kept him from tasting contentment in them : “ All this availeth me nothing, says he, so long as I see Mordecai, the Jew, sitting

at the king's gate." On the other hand, a peaceable spirit that can quietly pass by all injuries and affronts, enjoys a continual calm, and is above the malice of his enemies. Let them do what they can, they cannot rob him of his quiet; he is firm as a rock, which no storms or winds, can move, when the furious and revengeful man is like a wave, which the least blast tosses and tumbles from its place. Besides this inward disquiet of revengeful men, they often bring many outward calamities upon themselves; they exasperate their enemies, and provoke them to do them greater mischiefs; nay, they often willingly run themselves upon the greatest miseries in pursuit of their revenge, to which it is common to see men expose goods, ease, credit, life, and even soul itself. He who usurps a power to decide the justice of his cause himself, not by the force of truth, but the strength of his arm, and the point of his sword; if he falls in that horrid dispute without repenting, (and how can he repent in the agonies of death?) will surely have made a sacrifice of his soul to the rage of his revenge. The terrible consideration of hurrying our own soul, or the soul of one's enemy, to the world from whence there is no redemption, in the very heat of a diabolical passion, is enough to deter every thinking creature from such cursed pursuits of vengeance. "A soft answer turneth away wrath," says a wise man and a king; a better judge of the dignity of every man's passion, and of his duty to honour, than our modern braves; who, like gamesters in their debts at play, view it in no other parts of their lives; whence they may gallantly conclude, that that honour is false; for were it true, it would shine conspicuously in all their actions. How would such men laugh at a lesson of meekness, which often melts an adversary, and pacifies anger? If an enemy is so inhumane as not to be melted by it, the meek person is still a gainer; he gains an opportunity of exercising the most Christian grace

grace of charity and forgiveness, by which he at once obeys God, and imitates the example of our Saviour. He gains an accession, an increase to his reward hereafter, the expectation and belief of which is alone a delight infinitely more ravishing than the present enjoyment of all sensual pleasure can be.

The prayer our Redeemer has left us, enjoins us to "forgive the trespasses of others, as we hope to be ourselves forgiven." A consideration, which, methinks, should affright us into good-nature; if it does not, our malice is greater to ourselves, than to our enemies: For alas! what hurt is it possible for you to do to one another, in comparison of what you do yourself, in losing the pardon of your sins? Hell and damnation being certainly the portion of every unpardoned sinner, besides all other effects of God's wrath in this life. The Devil puts the phrase in the mouth of men, that "revenge is sweet;" for is it possible there can be, even in the most distempered palate, any such sweetness in it, as may recompence the everlasting bitterness that attends it? No man in his wits can, upon sober judging, imagine there is: But alas! we give not ourselves time to weigh things, suffering ourselves to be hurried away by an hasty humour, never considering how dear we must pay for it; like the silly bee, that in anger leaves at once her sting and her life behind her; the sting may, perhaps, give some short pain to the flesh it sticks in; yet surely the bee has the worst of it; that pays her life for so poor a revenge. Flatter not yourselves, that there is any way for you to evade the sentence that is past upon you, "If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your father forgive you." What a heavy curse does every revengeful person lay upon himself, when he prays to God "to forgive him his trespasses, as he forgives them that trespass against him." He, in effect, begs God not to forgive him; and it is too sure, that part of his prayer will be heard, he shall be forgiven, just as he forgives, that is, not at all. Christ assures us in the parable of the

the servant that obtained forgiveness of his lord of a vast debt, ten thousand talents, yet was so cruel to his fellow-servant, as to exact a trifling sum of an hundred pence: upon which his lord recalled his former forgiveness, and charged him again with the whole debt; "So likewise shall my heavenly father do unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every man his brother their trespasses." One such act of uncharitableness, is able to forfeit us the pardon God has granted us, and then all our sins return again upon us, and sink us to utter ruin. How grateful ought we to be to the Saviour of the world, the Son of God, "who died for us all?" And "it is but reasonable that we should not henceforth live unto ourselves, but unto him that died for us." He has earnestly recommended to us the love of our brethren; he does it with the most moving arguments, drawn from the greatness of his love to us; and what a monstrous piece of ingratitude would it be in us obstinately to refuse him so just, so moderate a demand? which we do, if we keep any malice or grudge to any person whatever. This is not only a vile act of unthankfulness and ingratitude, it is a horrible contempt and despising of him: This peace and unity of Christians, was a thing so much prized and valued by him, that when he was to leave the world, he thought it the most precious thing he could bequeath; and therefore left it by way of legacy to his disciples, "peace I leave with you." We use to set a great value on the slightest requests of our dead friends; and if we are so negligent of this precious legacy of Christ, it is a plain sign we want that love and esteem of him, which we have of our earthly friends, and that we despise him as well as his legacy.

What need there is of enlarging upon this duty of charity, is notorious to every one that lives in our times, when moderation, even in things of themselves indifferent, is so far from being reckoned a virtue, that it is declared in places, where nothing but the heavenly voice of truth should be always heard, to be a sin.

Can

have charity without moderation? Can we be zealous without holiness? Can we be holy and keep God's commands, which every where require unity, loving-kindness, forbearance, and what is contrary to a cruel and persecuting spirit?—this duty of moderation inconsistent with a just that pure religion, in the profession of which we are to live. The purity of our own profession make us look with pity and compassion at the sin of others; and when we pity, we shall endeavour to reform, not by violence, but by meek and friendly and peaceable ways prescribed us by the divine virtue and charity.

To obtain which, let us seek out for all Remedies its opposite, the vice of anger; to give them they, like bodily medicines, must be used in the efficacy of them is lost by being used too late. Reflexions that have been made on the duty of prevent all risings of rancour and revenge. much better they should seem as armour to than as balsam to cure. If this passion be not subdued in you, be sure to take it at its very first and let not your fancy chew, as it were, upon it, by often rolling it in your mind: remember God, by passing by the offence of your brother; and the devil, that lover of discord, by not hasting against him: remember this, before you are inflamed; for if the fire of anger be thoroughly kindled, it will cast forth such a smoke, as will blind reason, and make you unfit to judge, even in the very plain a case, whether it be better, by God, to purchase to yourself eternal happiness by obeying Satan, eternal misery.

In this speculative, let us proceed to practical by which the former must be approved. If we find so great charity in the actions, and none in the actions, we may say of the latter, as Jesus says of the faith he speaks of, "it is dead."

In this charity of the action, we are first to endeavour the comfort and refreshment of our brethren ; to desire to give them all true cause of joy and cheerfulness, especially when they are under any sadness or heaviness ; we should then bring forth all the cordials we can procure ; we should labour by all Christian and fit means, to cheer their troubled spirits, “ to comfort them that are “ in heaviness.” But our most zealous charities are to be laid out on the souls of our neighbours, not contenting ourselves with bare wishing them well, a sluggish sort of kindness, unworthy those who are to imitate the great Redeemer of souls, who did and suffered so much in that purchase ; we must also add our endeavour to make them what we wish them. If this purpose were fixed in our minds, we should find out many opportunities of doing good to their souls, which now we overlook. The senseless ignorance of some would call you to instruct them, and the open sin of others, to reprove and admonish them. Every spiritual want of our neighbour gives an occasion of exercising some part of this charity ; or if your circumstances be such, that upon serious reflexion, you think it in vain to attempt any thing yourself on account of your meanness, small acquaintance, or any the like impediment, which might render your exhortation fruitless ; yet if you are industrious in your charity, you may probably find out some other instrument by whom to do it more successfully. There cannot be a nobler study than how to benefit mens souls ; therefore, when the direct means are improper, it is fit we should diligently set ourselves to search after others. And after all our endeavours, if the obstinacy of men do not suffer us, or themselves, to reap any fruit from them ; if all our intreaties of them to have mercy on their souls, will not work upon them, we must, however, continue to exhort them by example. “ Let “ thy soul weep in secret for them, and let rivers of waters “ run down thine eyes, because they keep not God’s law.” Christ himself wept over them “ who would not know the things

ings that belonged to their peace." When no importunities have any effect, even then cease not to importune God for them. Samuel, when he could not dissuade the people from the sinful purpose they were upon, profest that he would, notwithstanding, continue praying for them, which he thought to be so much a duty, that it would be a sin for him to omit it. "God forbid that I should sin against the Lord, in ceasing to pray for you;" nor shall we need to fear that our prayers will be quite lost; for if they prevail not for those, for whom we pour them out; yet, as the psalmist says, they will return into our own bosoms.

This charity to the souls of men began to shine out some years ago, under the protection of our late gracious sovereign queen Mary, now reigning in heaven; a princess eminently distinguished from all others of her exalted rank, by her extensive charity to mens souls: in her was seen conspicuously the beauty of the now despised virtue of moderation, and her bright example was imitated by all who were so happy as to behold it. The societies which were set up to reform manners, received all kind of encouragement from her piety and bounty, and there appeared, while she lived, a pure disinterested spirit of charity, which has since sunk into a spirit of pride, profit and vexation. It is to be hoped, that so good a design will recover its reputation, by being espoused by men of wisdom and virtue, whose examples will do more towards making others good, than the force of laws and spitefulness of persecution, which are only for the incorrigible, where reproof is in vain. To pretend charity for the souls of others, and to have none for our own, is like running to quench our neighbours house when it is on fire, and leave our own burning. Those who do not reprehend, but insult their wicked brethren, who would not mend but punish them, are reformers who want to be themselves reformed: and it is not by such that we expect to have charity recommended and practised.

Though

Though we are to prefer the souls of men to their bodies in the exercise of this virtue, yet the latter is by no means to be neglected, and charity cannot be perfect where it does not take in both. We are not only to have compassion on their pains, we must do what we can for their ease and relief; it is not good wishes, nor good words neither, that avail in such cases. "If a brother or sister, says St. James, be naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled, notwithstanding ye give them not those things that are needful for the body, what doth it profit?" It surely profits them nothing in respect of their bodies, and will profit you as little in respect of your souls. This relieving of the bodily wants of our brethren, is a thing so strictly required of us, that we find it set down as an article which we shall be called to account for at the last day; and those who have omitted it, shall have this dreadful sentence pronounced against them, "depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire, for you fed not the hungry, you gave not drink to the thirsty, you harboured not the stranger, you clothed not the naked, nor visited the sick and imprisoned." These are common and ordinary exercises of charity, for which we cannot want frequent opportunities; but besides these, there may sometimes, by God's special providence, fall into our hands, occasions of doing other good offices to the bodies of our neighbours. We may sometimes find a wounded man, with the Samaritan, and then it is our duty to do as he did: We may sometimes find an innocent person condemned to death, as Susannah was, and then are, with Daniel, to use all possible endeavours for his deliverance; which is the case Solomon seems to refer to, when he tells us, "If thou forbear to deliver him that is drawn unto death, and them that are ready to be slain: if thou sayest, behold, we knew it not; doth not he that pondereth the heart consider? And he that keepeth the soul, doth not he know it? Shall not he render to every man according to his way?"

to his deeds?" We are not lightly to put off the with vain excuses, but to remember that God, who our most secret thoughts, will severely examine if we have willingly omitted the performance of charity. Sometimes again, and God knows, too now adays, we may see a man, that by a course of excess, is in danger to destroy his health, to shorten his life, and then it is due charity not only to the soul but to the body also, to endeavour to draw him out. The doing good to mankind, seems to be so implanted in our nature, as we are men, that we naturally account them not only unchristian, but inhuman who are void of it; and since this command is binding even to flesh and blood, our disobedience to it proceed from nothing but a stubbornness and rebellion against God who gives it.

We are to express our charity towards the bodies, as well as towards the souls of our neighbours; we also to do it towards the goods or estate of our neighbours. To that end we must be willing to assist and further him in all honest ways of improving and serving his estate or goods, by any neighbourly or friendly office: opportunities of this kind frequently occur; a man may sometimes, by his power or persuasion, deliver his neighbour's goods out of the hands of a thief or oppressor: sometimes again, by his advice and counsel, he may set him in a way of thriving, and deliver him from a ruinous course. These good offices are to do, even to those of our neighbours, that are more wealthy than ourselves, as well as to those that are poorer. For though charity does not bind us to give to those that want less than ourselves; yet, whenever we can further their profit without lessening our own way, if the damage be but light to us, in comparison of the advantage to them, it will become us no hazard that little damage, than lose them that advantage. Charity ties us more towards our neighbour; we are there only to consider the supply of his wants, and not to stick at parting with what

is our own to relieve him, but as far as we are able, to give freely what is necessary to his relief. If we do not thus love our neighbour, we love not God, as St. John tells us, "Whoso hath this world's goods, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" It is vain for him to pretend to love either God or man, who loves his money so much better, that he will see his poor neighbour, who is a man, and bears the image of God, suffer all extremities rather than part with any thing to relieve him. The performance of this duty is so acceptable to God, that it is called "a sacrifice well pleasing to him, and a sacrifice wherewith God is well pleased." But because even sacrifices themselves, under the law, were often made unexceptable, by being tainted and blemished, it will not be improper to enquire what are the due qualifications of this sacrifice.

One qualification is, that we do it in obedience and thankfulness to God, who has commanded us to give Alms. It being from his bounty alone, that we receive all our plenty, we cannot express our gratitude in a more proper way. "Our goodness extendeth not unto God;" the tribute we desire to pay out of our estates, we cannot pay to his person; but the poor are his proxies and receivers; and therefore whatever we would, by way of thankfulness, give back to him, should be, on his account, distributed to the needy; and he hath promised to accept such charity, as shewn unto himself; "in as much as ye have done it unto one of my brethren ye have done it to me." Another qualification of the sacrifice of charity is, that it be out of a true love and compassion to our neighbour, a tender fellow-feeling of his wants, and desire of his comfort and relief: it must also have some respect to ourselves, and be in hope of that eternal reward promised to the performance; "lay up your treasure in heaven;" by a charitable dispersing of your temporal goods to the poor, lay up a stock there, to gain a title to that endless bliss, which God

has

has promised to the charitable. The harvest of charity is so rich, that it would abundantly recompense us, tho' we should, as the Apostle speaks, "bestow all our goods to feed the poor;" but then we must be sure we make this our sole aim, and not propose to ourselves the praises of men, which in such case will be our only portion; "verily, I say unto you, they have their reward," is what Christ himself said on this occasion: And again, "ye have no reward of my father which is in Heaven." What a miserable exchange shall we make, if we prefer the vain blast of man's breath, to the substantial and eternal joys of heaven!

This is a plain reproof of all pompous charities: The vanity of some men extending beyond death itself, they would be praised, when they are rotting in their graves, for the magnificence, more than the usefulness, of their charity: of this kind are all stately edifices to lodge the poor in; the expence of which would entertain double the number; and it is not the convenience of those unhappy men and women whom they relieve which they consult, so much as the grandeur and appearance of their alms; a folly contradictory to the very nature of the duty. Those charities that are given with a view of self-interest, or out of a spirit of faction, as it is to be feared too many of our modern charities are, shall also have their reward in this world, and not of "our father which is in heaven."

Whatever alms we give, we must do it cheerfully, "not grudgingly, or as of necessity." The manner of giving adds as much merit to the giver as the value of the gift. There is no duty more pleasant and delightful to human nature, unless it be where covetousness or cruelty have quite worked out the man, and put a ravenous beast in his stead. What a ravishing pleasure it is to a benign soul, to see the joy which a seasonable alms brings a poor wretch. There is certainly nothing so pleasing to a sensible mind, as is the pleasure
con-

conceived in one's pleasing another. This is the more transporting in almsgiving, for that we know at the same time we are pleasing God as well as man ; for man may be pleased with us when God is displeased. The most sensual creature alive knows not how to bestow his money on any thing that shall bring him so great a delight ; and therefore it should, methinks, be no hard matter to give without grudging, since the doing it with alacrity and chearfulness, affords so much pleasure to ourselves.

It may be objected, by those whose hearts are set on the "mammon of unrighteousness," as well as by those who do not abound in the things of this world, that the danger of impoverishing one's self by what one gives, may take off the sweetness of this delightful act, and make men rather not give at all, or not so chearfully. Now, were this hazard never so apparent, yet it being the command of God that we shall thus give, we are yet to obey chearfully, and be as well content to part with our goods, in pursuance of this duty, as we are many times called to do upon some other : in which case our Saviour tells us, "He that forsakes not all that he hath, cannot be his disciple." Besides, God has particularly promised the contrary to the charitable, that it shall bring blessings on them, even in these outward things, "The liberal soul shall be made fat, and he that watereth shall be watered also himself." Again, "he that giveth to the poor shall not lack." And again, "he that giveth to the poor lendeth to the lord ; that which he hath given will he pay him again." It is thought a great disparagement amongst men, when we refuse to trust them ; it shews we either think them not sufficient, or not honest. How vile an affront is it then to God thus to distrust him ? How horrid blasphemy, to doubt the security of that, for which he has thus expressly past his word ? he who is the Lord of all, and therefore cannot be insufficient ; he who is the God of truth, and therefore will not fail to perform his promise. God be-
comes

comes surety for your poor brethren ; if they cannot repay you, God, the giver of all good, will assuredly do it : And whatever you thus give, is so far from being damage to you, that it is your great advantage. Your dispersing abroad, and giving to the poor is really a laying up in store for yourselves. What so prudent course can we take for our wealth, as to put it out of the reach of those innumerable accidents, by which a rich man may in an instant be, like Job, reduced to beggary ? by this lending it to the lord, we may be sure to find it ready at our greatest need, and that too with improvement and increase ; in which respect it is, that St. Paul compares alms to seed, whose nature it is to multiply and increase, and so do all our acts of mercy ; they return not single to us, but bring in their sheaves with them, a most plenteous harvest.

Let not this give countenance to a certain extravagance of alms, which the misguided zeal of some well-meaning Christians is apt to run into ; they give to the poor abroad plentifully, while they neglect the poor at home ; they are inquisitive after the necessities of other families, and careless of the wants of their own ; he who acts thus, is worse than an infidel ; we must give with discretion as well as with cheerfulness ; we must measure other mens wants by our own ability to relieve them ; and remember, that of those to whom much is not given, much will not be required.

In distributing our alms, we should take care to do it seasonably. It is true indeed there are some so poor, an alms can never come out of season, because they always want : yet even to them, there may be some special season of doing it to their greater advantage. For an alms may, sometimes, not only deliver a poor man from present extremity, but by a right timing of it, may set him in some way of a more comfortable subsistence afterward. It is generally a good rule to dispense what we intend to any, as soon as may be, delays being often hurtful to them and ourselves ; it is
surely

surely so to them, the more we prolong their groaning under their present want; and after we have designed them a relief, it is in some degree a cruelty to defer bestowing of it: Whatever we intend them for their greater comfort, they lose so much of it, as the time of the delay amounts to. In respect to ourselves, it is ill to defer it, for thereby we give advantage to the temptation either of the devil, or our own covetous humour, to dissuade us from it. It fares thus too often with many Christian duties, for want of a speedy execution, our purposes cool, and never come to act: Thus many resolve they will repent, but because they set not immediately about it, one delay succeeds another, and keeps them from ever repenting at all.

What we give, let us give prudently also as well as seasonably, where it is most needy, and may do the receiver most good: If we give at all adventures, to all that seem to want, we may sometimes give more to those whose sloth and lewdness is the cause of their want, than to those who deserve it; and so both encourage the one in their idleness, and disable ourselves from giving to the other: Yet, it is not to be doubted, but that the present wants of the most unworthy, may be such as makes it our duty to relieve them; but where no such pressing need is, we shall do best to choose out the fitter objects of charity: Those who either are not able to labour, or else have a greater charge than their labour can maintain. To such we should so give our Alms, as may be most likely to do them good; the manner of which may differ according to the circumstances of their condition. To some it may be best to give them by little and little; to others, the giving all at once may tend more to their benefit; and sometimes a seasonable loan may do as well as a gift, which one may be able to part with for a time, and not so well able to give it absolutely. It ceases to be charity if we lend to receive use; the charitable lender must resolve, if his debtor should prove unable
to

pay, to forgive so much of the principal as his needs require, and the creditor's abilities will permit. They want much of this charity who throw their poor debtors into jail, when they know they have nothing to answer the debt: A great act of cruelty, to make another miserable, when nothing is gained to ourselves by it. Another necessary qualification of charity, is to give liberally, not such pitiful scantlings as will bring no relief to the receiver, for that is a kind of mockery. As if one should pretend to feed a man, who is almost famished, by giving him a crumb of bread; such doles as that would be most ridiculous; yet I fear it is too near the proportion of some mens doles. "He that has two coats should impart to him that has none." John the baptist did not say, he that has a great wardrobe, but even he that has but two coats, must part with one of them. The primitive Christian converts "gave all to the use of the brethren," which tho' it be no measure of our constant practice, yet it shews us how fundamental a part of Christianity this charity is, that at the very founding of the church of Christ, it was practised to such vast degrees. The Gospel carries this Christian love so far, as "to lay down our lives for the brethren;" and can we imagine that we are commanded to be so prodigal of our lives, and are allowed to be sparing of our goods?

The example of our Saviour can never be too often urged on this occasion. "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, says St. Paul, who, tho' he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye thro' his poverty might be rich." He emptied himself of all that glory and greatness he enjoyed in heaven with his father; and submitted himself to a life of such meanness and poverty, only to enrich us: for shame then, let us not grudge to empty our coffers, to lessen somewhat of our heaps, for the relief of his poor members. Be liberal to the needy here, if you hope that God shall be liberal to you of his happiness hereafter. "He that soweth sparingly

C H A P T E R V.

THE SECOND, that he will soweth bount
in truth. And the proportion
of his giving shall not underval
the many degrees even in liberalit
of his giving. For what is given,
is given by a mean eff
and yet be the mo
may be more out
The po
given more to
two mi
it was no
whereas th
what they might ea
for himself. Th
to bounty,]
they shall gi
"every man,]
to let him gi
the advice
may be our guid
of you
By giv
become less sensibl
gradings:]
men in great d
which it will be
on other accou
his almsgivin
from time to time bl
be grateful and f
for his be
it when he gi
cannot reckon their weal
time to settle t
may take also long
for this sake for charitable us
can be performed, nor can th
hav

be any time out of season : But that somewhat be laid by, rather than left loose to our sudden rage, is sure very expedient ; and I doubt not, it makes trial of it, will, upon experience, acknowledge it to be so.

As to the exercise of our charity with respect to our own credit ; many are the occasions we may meet it, as well towards the guilty as towards the innocent. If a man, whom we know to be innocent, is calumniated and traduced, charity obliges us to do what we can, for the declaring his innocency, and delivering him from that false imputation, not only by witness when we are called to it, but by a voluntary offer of testimony in his behalf ; or if it is not in a judicious way, and the slander be only toft from one to another, by taking all occasions publicly to declare we know of his innocency : Yet how are we apt of late to be upon our guard, for fear of giving offence, by declaring too publicly what we know of the innocence of those whom scandal has assaulted in the most outrageous manner ! Tho' it be a duty upon us to defend the good name of our neighbour, yet it is not in some cases discharge our consciences.

There never was a time when calumny was so prevalent, never did slander so triumph ; and encouraged by success, it has not spared the most innocent, and the most worthy. Those are little acquainted with this use of charity, who delight in, or countenance scandal, not only against the innocent, but in many instances against the guilty also. Sometimes their fault is concealed, if it be such, that no other part of it is known to others makes it necessary to discover it ; or it is not so notorious, as that it will be sure to be itself.

These wounds of reputation are of all others the most difficult to cure ; and it may therefore well become Christians to prevent them, even where they have been received ; perhaps such a tenderness in hiding the fault, may

may sooner bring the offender to repentance, if it be seconded, as it ought to be, with all the earnestness of private admonition. If the fault be such that it is not to be concealed, yet still there may be room for this charity in extenuating and lessening it as far as the circumstances will bear; as if it were done suddenly and rashly, charity will allow some abatement of the censure, which would belong to a designed and deliberate act. The most frequent exercises of this charity happen towards those, of whose either innocence or guilt we have no knowledge. It is the property of love, not to think evil, and to judge the best; we should therefore abstain from uncharitable conclusions of them ourselves, and as much as lies in us, keep others from them also; for our neighbour's credit, which we should endeavour to preserve, is often as much shaken by unjust suspicion, as it would be by the truest accusation. "Judge not, that ye be not judged," is a very plain precept, and attended with a threat, which should make us tremble at the thoughts of doing an injustice to another's reputation; for if to think ill of them be forbidden, what must it be to speak ill? If to suspect be criminal, what is to accuse? And what will that judgment be, with which these dealers in slander are threatened, but dwelling to all eternity with the father of lies and malice, the devil and his angels? Such as sure as there is a God in heaven, will be the punishment, without repentance, of all those, who out of wantonness of wit, or perhaps baser inducements, to please and flatter those they address, do blacken the reputation of others, not only with wicked suggestions, but foul and positive assertions. It will be paid home to them, and to all that gave encouragement to them, in the strict and severe judgment of God.

Let us now consider charity as it has respect to justice: All the parts of it may indeed be ranked under that head; it being, by Christ's command, become a debt to our brethren; and to pay our debts is most surely

a part of justice: But because in common use inguisth between the offices of justice and charity will enlarge a little on those charitable acts, have reference to the former. Men look upon acts of mercy, as things purely voluntary, which have no obligation to. Upon this score they are think very high of themselves, when they have need any, tho' never so mean; but never blame themselves, tho' they omit all. What they think they either do or not, without committing a sin, if it must, in their opinion, be very meritorious. They do not remember, that, it is enjoined us to love our neighbour as ourselves, and that we are not left to our own choice in the matter. This is the standard which we are to measure all our actions which we do to others: Wherefore, when any necessity of our neighbour's presents itself to you, asks yourself, what I, if you were in the like case, your love to me would not make you industrious for relief? and whether your love to your neighbour must have the same effect for him? St. James calls this the royal law, and there is more humanity in it, than in all the notions of philosophy. All who profess themselves subjects to Christ, must be ruled by his law; whoever is so ruled, will not fail of performing all duties to others, because it is sure he would, upon the same occasions, have all such performed to himself. He is none but wishes to have his good name defended, his poverty relieved, his bodily sufferings succoured; only it may be said, that in the spiritual wants, there are some so careless of themselves, that they wish to be left alone, they desire no reproofs, no instructions; they are angry when they are given them; which makes it seem, that such are not bound by this law of charity. But this love of ourselves, which is the measure of that to our neighbour is to be understood to be that reasonable love which men are to have; and tho' a man fail of that due love

he owes himself, yet his neighbour has not forfeited his right by it. He has still a claim to such a degree of our love as is answerable to that, which in right we should bear to ourselves. And none can doubt but the care of our spiritual welfare is what we are bound to be solicitous for. Neither will the despising our own souls absolve us from charity to other mens.

A very useful and benign branch of charity is that of arbitrament and peace-making among others. This is beneficial both to the souls, bodies, goods and credit of our brethren; the restoring of amity, and reconciling of enemies, is a most blessed work, which brings always a blessing on the actors. "Blessed are the peacemakers:" Christ assured us of it, and we may be encouraged by it diligently to lay hold of all opportunities to do this office of charity, to use all our art, and endeavour to make up all grudges and quarrels among our neighbours. We must not only labour to restore peace where it is lost, but to preserve it where it is, by striving to beget in the hearts of all we converse with a true value of that most precious jewel, peace, and by a timely prevention of those jars and unkindnesses we see likely to fall out. It will often be in the power of a discreet friend or neighbour to cure those mistakes and misunderstandings, which are the first beginnings of quarrels and contentions; and it will be both more easy and more profitable, thus to prevent than pacify strifes. When a quarrel is once broken out, it is like a violent flame, which cannot so soon be quenched, as it might have been, while it was but a smothering fire. It also prevents many sins, which, in the progress of an open contention, are almost sure to be committed. "In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin," says Solomon; which cannot be more truly said of any sort of words, than those that pass in anger; tho' the quarrel be afterwards compos'd, yet those sins still remain on their account, and it is therefore a great charity to prevent them.

To fit a man for this excellent office of peace-making it is necessary he be first remarkably peaceable himself; for with what face can you persuade others to that which you will not perform yourself? Or how can you expect your persuasions will have any effect? There is one point of peaceableness which seems to be little regarded among men, and that is the case of legal trespasses. Men think it nothing to go to law about every petty trifle, and do not imagine there can be any blame in them, as long as they have the law on their side; but surely had we that true peaceableness of spirit which we ought, we should be unwilling, for such slight matters to trouble and disquiet our neighbours. Not that all going to law is utterly unchristian, but such kind of suits are certainly so, as are grounded upon contentiousness and stoutness of stomach, to defend an inconsiderable right, or to avenge a small trespass. In greater matters, he that parts with some of his right, for love of peace, does surely the most christianly, and most agreeably to the advice of the apostle, "rather to take wrong, and suffer ourselves to be defrauded."

How do those then dishonour their most holy profession, who having the care of the souls of a flock committed to their charge, instead of maintaining peace among them, instead of setting them a pious example of amity and gentleness, are continually persecuting them with litigious suits about their inconsiderable dues, and spoil all the hopes of harvest from the seed they sow among them. In the prosecutions of which, too many of them, not only take the most vexatious means of prosecution, but also carry themselves towards them with so much haughtiness and sullenness, that many of the sheep have gone astray, purely on account of their sullen and haughty shepherd. It is true, wordly men are so apt to defraud them of those dues which their avarice grudges them, that law will sometimes be necessary; yet even then, they, and all others, should take care of preserving peace by carrying a friendly and christian temper towards

the parties they contend with, in a legal way, not suffering their hearts to be at all estranged from them, by being willing to yield to any reasonable terms of agreement, whenever they shall be offered. Those that do not carry this temper of mind in their suits, cannot be reconcileable to that peaceableness, so strictly required of all Christians, who own themselves to be the servants of him whose title is the "Prince of peace."

It remains to treat of the charity of the actions, with respect to the extent of it, which must take in not only strangers, but reach out also its affectionate arms to the bitterest of our enemies. We have seen that it is our duty to forgive them, and when we have once forgiven, we can then no longer account them enemies; after which, it will be no hard matter, even to flesh and blood, to do all kind things to them. Indeed this is the way by which we must try the sincerity of our forgiveness. It is easy to say, I forgive such a man; but if when an opportunity of doing him good is offered, you decline it, it is apparent there yet lurks the old malice in your heart, where there is a thorough forgiveness, there will be as great a readiness to benefit an enemy as a friend and perhaps, in some respects, a greater: a true charitable person, looking upon it as an essential prize, when he has an opportunity of evidencing the truth of his reconciliation, and obeying the precept of his Saviour, by doing "good to them that hate him." If we could perform these acts of kindness to enemies in such a manner as might draw them from their enmity, and win them to peace, the charity would be doubled. This we should aim at, for that we see the apostle sets at the end of the before mentioned acts of feeding, &c. that we may heap coals of fire on their heads; not coals to burn them, but to melt them into all love and tenderness towards us.

Nothing is so necessary to the just performance of this virtue of charity, as the turning out of our hearts that self-love which so often possesses them, and so wholly too, that it leaves no room for charity, nay, nor justice
neither,

either, to our neighbour. By this self-love, I mean not that true love of ourselves, which is the love and care of our souls, for that would certainly help, not hinder us, in this duty; but I mean that immoderate love of our own worldly interests and advantages, which is apparently the root of all, both injustice and uncharitableness, towards others. The apostle sets this sin of self-love in the head of a whole troop of sins, as if it were some principal officer in the Devil's camp, and certainly not without reason; for it never goes without an accursed train of many other sins, which, like the dragon's tail in the Revelations, sweeps away all the care of duty to others. It makes us so vehement and intent upon pleasing ourselves, that we have no regard to any body else, contrary to the direction of the same apostle St. Paul, "to please his neighbour for his good to edification;" which he backs with the example of Christ, "for even Christ pleased not himself." The virtue of charity will not live in that breast where self-love dwells, it must be weeded out, for it is impossible they should prosper together. But when we have removed this hindrance, we must remember that this, as all other graces, proceeds not from ourselves. It is the gift of God, and therefore we must earnestly pray to him to work it in us, to send his Holy Spirit, which once appeared in the form of a dove, a meek and galleſs creature, to frame our hearts to the same temper, and enable us rightly to perform this duty, so pleasing in itself, so useful to mankind, so acceptable to God, that we cannot lengthen out our reflexions upon it too far: so copious is the subject, so important the duty to our happiness in this world, as well as in the next.

Mercy without alms is part of this virtue, when the person is disabled to express outwardly what he heartily desires; but alms without mercy is like prayers without devotion, or religion without humanity.

Mercy and alms are the body and soul of charity, and what we must pay to our neighbours need: God has

injoined this precept to the world, that the great inequality he was pleased to suffer in mens possessions might be reduced to some temper and evenness, and the most miserable person be reconciled to some sense and participation of felicity. To know what are the works of mercy, one need only remember the scripture rule of clothing the naked, and the like; to which a learned prelate of our church has added, “to bury the dead, to give physic to the sick, to bring cold and starved people to warmth and to the fire; for sometimes clothing will not do it; or this may be done when we cannot do the other. To lead the blind in right ways, to lend money, to forgive debts, to remit forfeitures, to mend high-ways and bridges, to reduce or guide wandering travellers, to ease their labours, by accommodating their work with apt instruments, or their journey with beasts of carriage: to deliver the poor from their oppressors, to die for your brother, to pay maidens dowries, and to procure for them honest and chaste marriages.” There are also works of spiritual alms: as “to teach the ignorant, to counsel doubting persons, to admonish sinners diligently, prudently, seasonably, and charitably; to which also may be reduced provoking and encouraging to good works, to comfort the afflicted, to pardon offenders, to succour and support the weak, to pray for all estates of men, and for relief of all their necessities; to which may be added, to punish or correct refractoriness, to be gentle in censuring the actions of others; to establish the scrupulous, wavering and inconstant spirits; to confirm the strong, not to give scandal; to quit a man of his fear, to redeem maidens from prostitution.” To all which he adds, “reconciling enemies, erecting public schools of learning, maintaining lectures of divinity, erecting colleges of religion and retirement from the noises and more frequent temptations of the world; finding employment for unbusied persons, and putting children to honest trades.” To which may be objected, that the erection of monasteries for retirement, which the good bishop calls colleges of religion, having by long experience

been found not to be free from temptations, and be-
hindring people from discharging the social duties
: such sort of charities are with reason exploded
the reformation, and there is more superstition than
in those that would restore them. If such new
ations were erected, might not one well demand,
ere the old ones destroyed? Would it not ren-
e alienation of vast revenues, by the laws of
nd, to be as bad as sacrilege? And when men
ce convinced of the wickedness of detaining them,
not be long before they will be restored; which
enough aimed at, in the bishop's admonishing all
Christians to erect such colleges. As for us, if we
regard to those other duties of charity, we may
ell leave the care of those religious convents to
blic; what more immediately concerns us, is
mindful not to give in alms that which is none of
n. How absurd, how unjust are those magnifi-
harities, which are raised out of extortion and in-
? What is not yours is due to the owners, not to
or. Every man has need of his own, and that is
st to be provided for: after which you must think
needs of the poor. He who gives to the poor what
his own, makes himself a "thief," and the poor
ivers." However, this is not to be understood as if
: unlawful for a man, who is not able to pay his
to give smaller alms to the poor. He may not
uch portions as may any way disable him to do
, but what, if it was saved, could not help him in
it. He may here do a little, since he cannot in the
duty do much. If we descend so low as rogues
bbers, their alms may also be regularly nutri-
If they cannot : all the persons whom they have
l, or adjust the several proportions: in those cases
re to give the unknown portions to the poor,
y of restitution: for it cannot well be called
God is the supreme Lord to whom such cheats
e, and the poor are his "receivers".

We may and ought to give alms of money unjust taken, and yet voluntarily parted with: of this kind is what is taken for false witnesses, bribes, simoniacal contracts, because the receiver has no right to keep it, nor the giver any right to recal it; it is unjust money, and payable to none but the supreme lord, who is the person injured, and to his delegates the poor. If the person injured by the unjust sentence of a bribed judge, or by false witnesses, be poor, he is the proper object to whom the restitution is then to be made. There is some sort of gain that has no injustice in it, properly so called; but it is unlawful and filthy lucre, such as is money taken for work done unlawfully on the Lord's day, hire taken by players and buffoons, the wages of harlots, and the like. Of this money some preparation is to be made, before it be given in alms: it is infected with the plague, and must pass through the fire or the water before it be fit for alms; the person must repent, and leave the crime, or his very charity will favour of the infection.

He who gives alms out of custom, or to upbraid the poverty of the other, or to make him mercenary and obliged, or with any unhandsome circumstances, does not do it in mercy, nor out of a true sense of the calamity of his brother, he feels nothing of it himself, which he ought to do before he can well discharge himself in the practice of this virtue.

He who does not seek the praise of men, may give his dole either in public or private; for our Saviour intended only to provide against hypocrisy, when he made alms to be given in secret: it being otherwise one of his commandments, "that our light should shine before men." This is more excellent, than more safe. We must, according to our ability, give to all men that need, and, in equal needs, give first to good men rather than to bad men; and if the needs be unequal, do so too, provided that the need of the poorest be not violent and extreme; but if an evil man be in extreme
necessity,

ty, he is to be relieved rather than a good man, in tarry longer, and may subsist without it. If he good man, he will desire it should be so, because if is bound to save the life of his brother with some inconvenience to himself, and no difference of or vice can make the ease of one beggar equal he life of another.

vicious persons we should give no alms, if such will support their sin; as if they will continue in s, "if they will not work neither let them eat," if ill spend it in drunkenness or wantonness. When persons are reduced to very great want, they must be d in such proportions as may not relieve their dying it may refresh their faint or dying bodies.

r house-keepers that labour hard, and are bur- with many children, are the best objects of cha- or gentlemen fallen into sad poverty, especially innocent misfortune; though if their crimes brought nto it, they are to be delivered according to the rule. Persecuted persons, widows, and fartherless n, are equal objects of charity; the former to be and relieved, and the latter to be put to honest and schools of learning. Search into the wants nerous and meaner families, there being many s that have nothing left them but misery and mo-

Towards such we must add two circumstances of r, to enquire them out, and convey ourselves to n such a manner, as not to make them ashamed. iving, look for nothing again; have no considera- future advantages: give to children, to old men, unthankful, to the dying, and those you shall ee again. For else your alms or courtesy is not , but traffic and merchandise. Be sure that you ot to relieve the needs of your enemy and the in- ; you may possibly win him to yourself, but your on should be to win him to God.

fit not your alms to uncertain under-dispensers. iding which you secure your alms in the right channel,

Channel, and have the pleasure of doing yourself the labour of love.

Whatever is superfluous in your estate is to be dispensed with in alms; but that is not to be reckoned superfluous which is necessary to maintain the decency of our rank and person, not only in present needs, but in all future necessities and very probable contingencies, but no farther: we are not obliged beyond this, unless we see very great, public, and calamitous necessities. But yet, if we do extend beyond our measure, and give more than we are able, we should but imitate the zealous examples of the first Christians, who brought their all into the public stock: examples however, that are not set us so much for our imitation, living under constitutions, and the state of Christianity being altered, as for our admiration. All Christians should not be nice and curious, fond and indulgent to themselves in taking accounts of their personal conveniencies, they should make their estimate moderate and easy, according to the order and manner of Christianity, and then the consequence would be, that the poor would be more plentifully relieved, they themselves would be the more able to do it, and they would be able to give the more comfortable account of their stewardship in the day of the Lord Jesus. Superfluous servants, unnecessary feasts, costly apparel, imprudent law-suits, vain journeys, should be retrenched for this purpose.

This is only intended as advice in the matter: for many of these superfluities are permitted in princes, noblemen, and others, according to their ranks and fortunes: to have variety of clothes, particularly, as it is a mark of magnificence, so it may be an occasion of charity, by giving them, as rewards to servants, or in alms to their wanting neighbours. It ceases to be charity, when by doing this they minister to the vanity or luxury of others, or when all is consumed on their own lusts.

He who plays at any game, must not be beforehand to be indifferent whether he wins or loses. If he gives what he wins to the poor, he will do well, provided his game does not provoke him to anger, and he neither wastes too much time upon it, nor tempts his neighbour to do it, or to lose more than is convenient for him, or suitable to his circumstances. Indeed it were better yet, if he would lay by so much as he is willing to give, without playing at all; there being no kind of game but what carries too much temptation with it, and can hardly be delighted in without sin.

To fast sometimes, is not only a duty in us on our own accounts, and for our souls sake, it is also required of us on account of our brother; if we will not fast that he may eat, we should die for him. We hear of very high and over-righteous strains of charity practised by some in former ages, when popish superstition raised the merit of outward works almost as high as the merit of our Saviour's death, and thereby tempted many to go farther and to do more than was required from them.

We have a sure word of prophecy to direct us, and farther than that bids us we need not go, and that teaches us to be discreet as well as fervent in charity. When we give alms to beggars, and persons of that low rank, it is better to give little to each, that we may give to the more. But in religious charities, in supplying the accidental needs of decayed persons, fallen from great affluence to great indigence, it is better to unite than to disperse our alms, to make a noble relief to a man, and restore comfort to him, than to support only his natural wants, and keep him alive only, unrescued from sad discomfort.

Though the precept of alms binds not indefinitely to all kinds of charity, yet he who delights to feed the poor, and spends all his portion that way, is not bound to enter into prisons, and redeem captives; but we are obliged by the present circumstances, the special disposition of providence, and the misery of an object, to this or that particular

ticular act of charity. The eye is the sense of mercy, the heart the organ of compassion. When we have a moving object present to our eye, the heart will be touched with pity if our breasts be humane; and we may be sure, that whoever is in our sight, or in our neighbourhood, and in distressed circumstances, is fallen into the lot of our charity.

Those who have no money may have mercy. They are bound to pity the poor, and to pray for them. Be your charity little or great, corporal or spiritual, the charity of alms or the charity of prayers, a cup of wine or a cup of water, if it be but love to the brethren, or a desire to help all or any poor Christians, it shall "be accepted according to what a man hath, not according to what he hath not." Love is all this, and all the other commandments; it will express itself where it can, and where it cannot, the one by good gifts, the other by good wishes.

When we consider how great a blessing it is, that we are not ourselves reduced to the necessity of receiving alms, it is a ready instance of our thankfulness to God, to give them for his sake. Charity is one of the wings of prayer, by which it flies to the throne of grace: it crowns all the works of piety; it causes thanksgiving to God in our behalf, and the poor to bless us and pray for us: it is like the effusion of oil on the woman of Sidon, as long as she pours into empty vessels it could never cease running; or like the widows barrel of meal, it consumes not as long as she fed the prophet. The sum of all is contained in the words of our Saviour, "give alms of such things as you have, and behold all things are clean unto you." Let us therefore so perform our alms, that like curls of holy incense they may ascend to heaven, and breathe a sweet-smelling savour into the nostrils of God; for it is by this alone they are consecrated into an acceptable sacrifice to him, and rendered true piety and devotion: whereas if we give our alms merely to be seen of men, or to serve our worldly interest, they
proceed

not from mercy, but self-love. They are a fordid for applause and profit, as has been already said; and hence our Saviour cautions us, "take heed you do not your alms before men, to be seen of them, else you have no reward of your father, which is in heaven. Therefore when thou dost thy alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues, and in the streets, that they may have glory of men: verily, I say unto you, they have their reward."

There are too many, who lay too much stress on the outward act of giving, and do not sufficiently regard the inward act of mercy, which must always be attended with

Some men think to compound with heaven, and retain vices which they will not part with, by certain virtues which come cheap to them. A man of a dissolute constitution flatters himself, that his continence and temperance make amends for his avarice. He who is parsimonious of what he gets to the poor, thinks it mends his conscience to the other part, no matter how he came by it. To do alms is to give away something of our own, to satisfy another's want or misery; wherefore to give away one man's right to supply another's necessity, is as much an alms as a robbery. By this rule, debtors owe more than they can pay, are obliged in conscience, not to intrench upon their justice by their mercy; nor to disable them from being just to their creditors, by being merciful to the poor: for though to relieve the poor is outwardly and abstractedly good; yet it is to be considered, whether particular actions are good or bad, according to the circumstances which adhere to them; and when that which is nakedly good, happens to be clothed with an evil circumstance, it is so far evil and unlawful; and therefore, when my relieving the poor is accompanied with this evil circumstance of defrauding my creditors, it is due, I am so far bound in conscience not to relieve them; because if I do, I must relieve them unjustly; and we are especially to take care, that our alms be just and righteous. It is true, those unhappy persons, who cannot

cannot propose to themselves, to pay their creditors any thing more of their just debts than would almost be taken for charity, and yet can spare so small a dale from their own necessities; these we have before shewn, to be under an equal duty of helping the needs of others, as if they did not want themselves to answer what they owe to their creditors.

I cannot but again reflect on the pleasure there is in the chearful practice of this virtue. Human nature within us, by a kind of sympathetic motion, exalts and raises itself up. If mercy be the spring of our alms, they will flow with a free current; because all the while I am watering others I shall feel the refreshment of my own streams. When we bestow our alms with an unwilling mind, it is plain it is not mercy, but shame, or fear, or importunity which moves us; there is then no virtue in them, nor can we expect that any reward should attend them. To contribute towards anothers relief, because we are ashamed or afraid to do otherwise, is rather paying a tax than giving an alms; and when nothing can be wrung out of me, but what is drained by importunity, I give not for the poor's relief, but for my own peace and quiet. What virtue is it for a man to give, only to get rid of a dun? To render alms virtuous they must be generous, and to deserve reward we must expect none. They must flow, like water from the spring, in natural and unforced streams, and not be pumped from us by importunity or shame. That our charity should be extensive, as well in the portion as in the object, we have shewn in the foregoing pages: to which may be added, that the design of alms, which are the fruits of mercy, being to redress the poor man's misery, to satisfy his craving hunger, and rescue him from the pinching necessities under which he groanes and languishes; it measures its alms accordingly, and proportions them to the wants it supplies: its aim being not only to rescue the miserable from extreme misery, but also, according to its power, to render them happy. It does not think it sufficient to
deliver

deliver the needy from extreme want and famine, but covets also to render their lives happy, and give them a comfortable enjoyment of themselves: for merely to keep a man from famishing, looks rather like a design to prolong his torment, and spin out the duration of his misery, than to contribute to his ease and happiness. If we intend this happiness, as we must do, if we have a merciful intention, we shall endeavour, not only to enable him to live, but to live comfortably, and accordingly proportion our alms.

In times of sickness, or scarceness of work, in dearth of provisions, or in the beginning of arrests of poor men, before the person has devoured them; or after a great loss when their fortunes are sinking, and a small support may keep their head above water: in word, when they are young and capable of instruction, and their friends are not capable of disposing of them; when the placing them out to some honest trade may prevent their turning thieves or beggars, and render them useful to their relations, their friends, and the public: when they are setting up with an insufficient stock, and a little help may encourage their diligence; these and such like are seasons of alms, in which, by sending a helping hand, we may rescue many a poor wretch out of a deep abyss of misery, and make their future condition easy and prosperous. We must not reserve our charities to our last will and testament, but embrace all opportunities while we are living, to give timely relief to the necessitous; otherwise we shall at our death vainly pretend to give of our substance, because we then can keep it no longer, and it will be only a throwing over the board when the ship is ready to sink. He who defers his alms, when proper seasons are presented, is so far the cause of all the consequent calamities which the poor suffer by the want of them; and since the design of alms is to relieve the sufferings of the poor, it is doubtless a degree of cruelty to prolong their sufferings by needlessly delaying to relieve them. You would think
her

ber a cruel mother, that having bread enough and to spare, should rather chuse to afflict her child with a long unsatisfied hunger, than to content its craving appetite, by giving it its food in due season; and sure it is a great defect of compassion unnecessarily to prolong the sufferings of our indigent brother, though it be but for a day or an hour, when we have a present opportunity to relieve him. And since, whatever relief we design him, he must necessarily lose so much of it, as the time of our delay amounts to; mercy obliges us to relieve him quickly, and not suffer him to pine away while our charity is growing,

In giving of alms, as well as other Christian duties, discretion and prudence ought to be observed, for thus the royal prophet tells us, "a good man sheweth favour, and lendeth, and will guide his affairs with discretion." Unless then prudence be the dispenser of our alms, mercy will miss of what it aims at and designs by them, which is to do good to the poor, to supply their necessities, and give them a comfortable enjoyment of themselves: instead of which, if we do not manage ourselves with prudence, we shall many times create necessities by supplying them, and increase and multiply the miseries of the world by an unskilful endeavour to redress them. It being with alms as with estates, where half of the riches consists in the discretion of the owner, and those very Charities which are distributed by a blind superstition, or a foolish pity, do many times do more hurt than good. What harvest can the world reap from this precious seed of our alms, when they are sown with a careless or unskilful hand? When they are either thrown on a heap to useless or superstitious purposes, or scattered at all adventures, without any distinction of the cultivated from the fallow ground. Thus the birds of prey, useless vagrants, drones, and beggars, devour and eat them up, while the modest, impotent, and laborious poor, are utterly destitute and unprovided.

to forget to exercise our prudence and discretion in method of providing our alms, in the nature and quantity of them, as to the proportions of them, and manner of bestowing them. To this end, prudence will direct us not only to be frugal in our expenses, to pare off our superfluities, and to be diligent and industrious in our callings, that we may have to bestow upon them that need; but also to appropriate a certain part of our revenues and profits to those pious uses, that so we may not be to seek for alms upon sudden and emergent occasions, but may always have a fund ready to supply our daily distribution; and if we take care not to alienate and embezzle this store, we shall always give with cheerfulness, which doubles the value of the charity, both as to the pleasure we have in bestowing it, and the poor in taking it.

Our prudence is also to be exercised in the choice of the objects of our charity, taking care that they be such as do truly need and deserve it. For unless we do so, we shall often encourage vice instead of relieving poverty, and be tempted by the clamorous importunities of idle and vicious persons, to prostitute our alms to their sloth and intemperance. How frequently do we see the imprudent charities of well disposed minds poured into those sinks of filthiness, and, like the sacrifices of Bel, devoted to the importunate lusts of idle beggars and drones, that are not so properly the members as the wens of the body politic, as being utterly useless to all its rational ends, and only serving to discover and bring diseases upon it, drawing away the nourishment of it, from its useful parts and members. Now what a shame and pity is it that these prodigious numbers of poor, who are neglected and unrelieved, should be left to starve, or to creep along in misery, while thousands of others, who are more deserving, and whose relief would cost no more, are relieved.

cessities? Wherefore tho' the former are not to be altogether neglected, when their needs are real and urge yet certainly prudence will direct our charity to persons as have either fallen from riches to poverty and consequently are less able to toil and drudge bread, or else such as are either worn out by labour or disabled from it by sickness, or oppressed by such numerous charge of children, as does exceed their most industry to maintain. In this ground prudence will advise us to sow the main of our charities, and to throw it away with a careless hand, upon the bare rocks and highways, to be devoured by vermin birds of prey.

We have already observed that prudence, in determining the nature and quality of our alms, direct us to prefer those which may serve a poor man for a constant provision, and put him in a fixed way of living, before those that are transient, and only hold him a pang of need, that just hold him up from perishing for an hour, but do not take him out of the deep waters. If the person to whom we design a relief, is able to work, it is a much wiser charity to provide him an employment, or to contribute towards setting him up in his trade, than barely to relieve his present necessities; because by this means we relieve him for the present and for the future, converting our alms into a standing maintenance; upon which account it is doubtless a very prudent charity to contribute to the erection and support of public work-houses for the poor, where they and their children may be pro-

to the uninstructed; for tho' money indeed
 r all these needs, yet we are not sure it will
 laid out upon them.

e stating the proportion of our charity, every
 as been observed, must be his own casuist.
 he Jews had a fixed and stated proportion, a
 hing was prescribed to them by the law of
 annal tithe of their increase for the main-
 their priests and sacred officers, and a third
 ing, which amounted to the thirtieth part of
 ase, and was directed for the supply and
 ce of the poor. If such a proportion was
 f the Jews, we may be sure a greater is
 us, whose righteousness must exceed the righ-
 of the Scribes and Pharisees, if ever we mean
 to the kingdom of heaven. Divines have
 duty of charity as practised by the Jews, in
 courses, but I think that Moses's legal provi-
 : thirtieth part was of the same kind as our
 provision in the poor's-tax, and does not re-
 part of charity which we are treating of, the
 actice of it, what is voluntary and chearful,
 is constrained or enjoined by law. In the
 f this virtue God has not determined the exact
 is, and it is impossible for us to do it, where
 such different circumstances and abilities, in
 r. We must therefore, leave men, who best
 l their own condition, to the guidance of
 conscience and discretion. They are, in
 lace, to consider what is requisite to support
 ie condition of their birth, their place, office,
 , and to the discharge of their several obli-
 For prudence does not require of all, the
 ortions of charity. Some may afford a twen-
 ers a thirtieth, and to others, whose children
 idence are numerous, or whose fortunes are
 and entangled, the hundreth part may be
 sure. According as the heap is, the wise
 man

man is to sow and distribute ; subtracting not will support his life, but also what will m: decency of his estate and person, and that : to present needs, but also as to future nece very probable contingencies. However, tho are not to beggar themselves to enrich others are not to give to the poor abundantly, but : according to their abilities, yet it is doubt safer to exceed than to fall short of our due p

Having fixed the proportions of your estate charity, you ought in the next place to a your prudence in what proportions to di And here prudence will direct you to diff distributions, according to the different cir of those you design to relieve by them. Pr rects you to give to such as are of a lower little and little, according to their emergent to which you are not always to limit your sometimes to extend them even to their r and recreation ; that so together with thei drudgery, they may now and then enjoy bath for the ease of human nature. But to f fortunes are by loss and accident sunk, bot and mercy require us to enlarge the proporti alms, considering how great a fall it is from necessity, and consequently how much mor sary to raise up such dejected creatures, w: unacquainted with misery, into any degree fort or self-enjoyment. Prudence will farther to search and find out just needs, and preven from asking, by surprising them with a kindi they did not look for. This will strengthen i in the providence of God, who thus cre friends out of the dust, and brings them without and beyond their expectations. Pru restrain us from upbraiding those we give to assuming by it a lordly superiority over o creatures and fellow-christians ; that would

h a bit and a knock, and sophisticate our mo-
cruelty. When any wretched creature would
r beg of us, prudence will advise us not to turn
y with scorn, nor yet to remove him at a dis-
h signs of disdain or contemptuous violence ;
: see reason to grant him his request, to do it
ly and open hand. Thus the freeness of our
nhances the comfort of it ; and what we de-
r a relief and succour, will leave no sting be-
n the mind of the receiver. We ought above
s to take especial care not to oppress the mo-
the humble, especially of those that have been
ive and not to receive, not to relieve them with
ks or angry words, or a scornful and severe
r ; neither should we expose their poverty by
g the charity, or conveying it to them in the
v of the world ; but to hand our relief to them
secret and benign, courteous and obliging man-
hat they may receive it with chearfulness, and
blushing and confusion.

contrary to this humane and graceful way of
: the manner of the great ones of the world in
? When they give, it is commonly with a look
er shews the gift to be extorted by importunity,
ved as a dole to slaves ; they seem to affect this
: sort of bounty to prevent their being again im-
l, or peoples thinking they thought it a duty to
able. Not considering that those that want, have
kind of property in the small of their estates,
arity should lay by for them ; that their distri-
: not a work of supererogation, and which they
ave done or not done with the same innocence.
: always indebted to the necessities of others ;
bts are truly debts of honour, and ought to be
harged ; they are not left at liberty to give if
use, or to let it alone. We have shewn how they
nly encouraged in, but commanded to, the per-
e of this duty ; which indeed is not performed
when

such a mixture of severity and sweetness, as neither encourage them to grow upon our charity, nor drive them into desperation of it. People would not be so vain in their manner of giving alms, nor so sparing in their measure of it, if they would consider that the whole series of God's providence is little else but a continuance of alms and charities to his creatures. It was his bounty that founded this vast and magnificent hospital world, that stocked it with such a numberless swarm of creatures, and endowed it with such plentiful provision for the support and maintenance of them all. We all of us live upon his alms, and depend on his bounty for every breath of air we draw, for every drop of bread we eat, and for every rag of clothes we wear. Indeed what are all the good things of this world, but so many arguments of his infinite liberality? Look you where about nature, consider the whole tenor of his providence, survey all the works and actions of his hands, you shall find them all conspiring in that admirable character given of him by the Psalmist, "Thou art merciful and dost good." In relieving therefore the necessities of others we act the part, and the best part too, of our mighty Father of beings, who sits at the upper end of the table, and carves to his whole creation. The charitable man "is a God to the unfortunate," imitating the

, how divinely magnificent it is to supply the
 es, and contribute to the happiness of others,
 ld court it as our highest preferment, and bless
 on our bended knees, for deeming us worthy of
 illustrious employment ; and that among the nu-
 blessings he has heaped upon us, he has vouch-
 admit us to share with himself the glory of "doing

His only son, Jesus Christ, forsook his father's
 and came down from heaven into our nature to
 a poor perishing world, and rescue it from eternal
 ion. What a glorious recommendation is this
 ity ? He chose rather to do good upon earth,
 reign over angels in heaven : the sole business
 ght worthy of himself while he was here, was to
 hungry, to cure the blind and the lame, to re-
 sick, to instruct the ignorant, and reclaim the
 us. This was the drift of all his actions, this
 ject of his miracles, this the scope of all his doc-
 his whole life was nothing else but a continued
 f beneficences ; he went about "doing good."
 r this ye hard-hearted Christians ; you who stop
 rs against the poor man's cries ! What would your
 Lord have done, had he been in your case and
 tances ? Would he, who had so much compas-
 the multitude, as to work a miracle to feed them,
 rned that miserable wretch away as you do, with-
 least dram of comfort or relief ? Would he,
 heart and hand were always open to the poor
 ferable, have despised the poor man's moans, as
 ? peruse the pattern of his life ; scan over his
 ehaviour, and see if there be any one action in
 great exemplar, that does not upbraid you, and
 ne upon you, for calling yourself, so narrow,
 and stingy a creature, one of his disciples, who
 merciful, generous, and liberal a master. If so,
 or the future, either to be so honest as to follow
 nple, or so modest as to disclaim any relation
 . Farther, to suppose ourselves independent
 . I. L. possesi-

possessors of our outward enjoyments and abilities to do good to others, is in effect to divest God of his dominion, and strip him into an insignificant cypher, that only sits above in the heavens with his arms folded in his bosom, and not concerning himself in the affairs of this lower world; looking down only from his throne to please himself by seeing men scrambling for their several shares of it. But if we suppose him, as we have infinite reason to do, the almighty author, and supreme disposer of all things, we must acknowledge, that it is from his overflowing bounty that we derive whatever we possess; that it is the gold of his mines which enriches us, the crops of his fields which feed us, the fleeces of his beasts which clothe us, and that every good thing we enjoy, is handed to us by the ministry of his all-disposing providence; since we owe all to his bounty, and in our greatest flourish are but his almsmen and pensioners, how deeply are we obliged to return to him the oblations of love and thanksgiving? And since love and gratitude consist, either in the affection of the mind, or in the verbal signification of it, or in the effectual performance of good things to the persons whom we thank and love; this last is the most complete and substantial expression of the reality of our words and affections. For tho' good-will is indeed the root of love and gratitude, yet it lying underground, and out of sight, we cannot conclude its being and life without visible fruits of beneficence to the person whom we thank and love. As for good words, they are at best but the leaves of gratitude and love, but it is good works that are the real fruits of them, by which their sincerity is demonstrated: for as no man does ever impress a false stamp upon the finest metal, so costly thanks and love are seldom counterfeit. It is to avoid giving any thing, or being at any trouble, that men do so often forge and feign, pretending to make up, in wishing well, the defect of doing so, and paying down words instead of things. But where works are wanting, there no expression of our love
and

ide can neither be real in itself, or acceptable
 We may spare our breath as well as our money ;
 empty hand gives the lye to a full mouth ; and
 bal praises of God, when we will part with
 or his sake, are only so many trifling compli-
 downright mockeries : But then do our gra-
 love to God discover their reality, when it ap-
 our actions, that we think nothing too dear for
 for his sake, who hath fed and clothed us, and
 y supplied our necessities, we are ready upon
 unities, to feed, and clothe, and supply the
 of others. And can we think any thing too
 press our gratitude to him, upon whose over-
 bounty we depend for every blessing we have or
 ; who has provided, not only this temporal
 our bodies, but also an eternal heaven for
 and has sent his son to us from his own bosom,
 our way to it, and conduct us thither ? Or can
 any thanks too costly for that blessed son, who
 not to come down from heaven into this vale of
 and pour out his blood for our sakes ? Was it
 harder for him to part with heaven, than it is
 part with a little money ? And can you think
 bestow an alms for his sake, who grudged not
 on his life for yours ? This is the argument of
 , “ for ye know the grace of our lord Jesus Christ,
 he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor,
 to his poverty might be rich.” If men would
 consider the high obligation they are charged with
 is, on the accounts of God and our Saviour, they
 need so many motives to it ; but really cha-
 come so cold and dead, there is hardly any thing
 remaining in it. We give sometimes because
 ers do it, and would not be singular ; but alas,
 give, as those who know that God lends the
 his name, and allows him to ask our succours
 ce : He gives him credit from himself to us
 e stands in need of, and bids him charge what

he receives upon his account ; permitting us to reckon him obliged by it, and to write him down our debtor. When we stop our ears to the cries of the poor, God takes himself to be repulsed by us, and interprets it as a rude affront to his own person, it being offered to one that bears his name, and wears his livery : for the poor man's rags are a badge of his relation to God, and his wants are the mouths by which God himself treats our relief ; assuring us that he will place it to account, and take it as kindly at our hands, as if we had relieved him in his own person, as we have more than once proved from his own word. Should we not break out into these holy expostulations then, rather than hesitate the least in the practice of this duty of charity ? " O blessed God, that thou shouldst own thyself my debtor, only for repaying thee a part of what thou has lent me, and of what is still thy own by an unalienable property ; that thou, who art the great landlord of the world, shouldst thus acknowledge thyself indebted to thy poor tenant, for paying thee a small quit-rent, a pepper-corn of homage for what I hold in thy right, and by thy bounty ! " For thus it is, God lends us our estates, and then, writes himself our debtor for that small part which we repay him in the works of piety and charity. And as God puts our alms to his own account, so does our Saviour also ; " Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me : " That is, I account myself obliged by it, and do receive it at your hands with the same kindness and acceptance as if you had been with me in my state of humiliation, and shewed me all this mercy in my own person. Now when both my Creator and my Redeemer send a poor wretch to me in their own name and person, and desire me for their sakes, and upon their account, to relieve him, can I be either so ungrateful to them, to whom I am indebted for all that I have or hope for, or so wanting to my own interest, as to neglect so fair an opportunity of making them some return of their favours, and obliging them by it, to heap more favours upon

CHARITY

For what is giving us the poor? I give us the
it, who please, compensate me I expect
kind and liberal persons: I do not care
for, we have not forgotten our noble
and fairly depend upon it, that it shall be
flowed in words of charity. So much, with
it and interest, you have learned to you in the
God, who will either return it to you either
doleful: for, what is the other times but
to you with infinite interest, as the weight of
all crown. Thus by giving alms we treasure
able wealth in heaven before us, as it were, by
change, as our reward, when we come to
suffering creature." When by relieving the poor
we, we may thus transform our *deeds* into gold,
the more, our *gold* into *deeds*, and
for his wife, would refuse any fair opportunity
such a blessed exchange? The *deeds* of the
is very great importance to our *poor* and
ty, that we have extended our *charity*
a more than ordinary length. The *poor*
to the exercise of it for their own *poor*
lives of the poor and *needy*, but *poor*
has been so much our *charity*, that *poor*
e thought too *important*, and *poor*
forced one thing too much, and *poor*
an hardly be any thing but *poor*
impress this *virtue* on the *poor*
rich said of nothing but *poor*
and more happy.



E N V Y.

ONE may say more hard things against than against the most tormenting disease; full of pain, and a great instrument of vexation. It eats the flesh, dries up the marrow, makes lean eyes, lean cheeks, and a pale face; it is no more less than a direct resolution never to enter into life by the way of noble pleasure taken in the good of God. It is most contrary to God, and the very reverse of felicities and actions of heaven, where every star creates the light of the other, and the multitude of guests at the supper of the lamb, makes the eternal more a festival. It is perfectly the state of hell and passion of devils, for they do nothing but despise themselves, and envy others quiet and safety, and cannot rejoice either in their good or evil: tho' they endeavour to hinder that, or procure this, with all devices and arts of malice, and of a great underling. Envy can serve no end in the world; it cannot please any thing, nor do any thing, nor hinder any thing, but the content and happiness of him that has it can never pretend to justice, as hatred and uncharitableness sometimes may: for there may be cause of hatred, I may have wrong done me, and then he who has some pretence, tho' no just argument; where one man is unjust or injurious for being prosperous and another man is unjust for being poor and miserable. Many men therefore profess to hate another man, but no man owns envy, as being an enmity and dissimulation for no cause but goodness or felicity. En

are like caterpillars, that delight most to devour
 nd excellent fruits. Envy is the basest of all crimes,
 malice and anger are appeased with benefits, but
 is exasperated, as envying the fortunate both the
 or and the will to do good ; it never leaves murmur-
 'till the envied person be levell'd, and then only the
 ure leaves to eat the liver. If his neighbour be
 le miserable, the envious man may be himself trou-
 d, but his sorrow is selfish ; and he does not so much
 y the miserable as himself, for being liable to the
 ae misfortune. There is something more slavish in this
 an in any other passion ; it confesses a superiority in
 e object it works upon, either in merit or in fortune,
 and hates it for that subjection, which perhaps is only
 dream of his, and a disease of his imagination. We
 ave been talking of its opposite, charity ; and by exa-
 mining the beauty of that virtue, we shall the better see
 he deformity of this vice.

It is an argument of a great and generous mind to
 employ ourselves in "doing good" to extend our thoughts
 and care to the concerns of others, and to use our
 power and endeavours for their benefit and advantage ;
 because it shews an inclination and desire in us, to have
 others happy as well as ourselves. Those who are of a
 narrow and envious spirit, of a mean and sordid dispo-
 sition, love to contract themselves within themselves,
 and like the hedge-hog, to shoot out their quills at every
 one that comes near them ; they take care of no body
 but themselves, and foolishly think their own happiness
 the greater, because they have it alone and to themselves.
 But the noblest and most heavenly dispositions think
 themselves happiest when others share with them in
 their happiness. Of all beings, God is the farthest re-
 moved from envy ; and the nearer any creature ap-
 proaches to him, the farther it is off from this hellish
 quality and disposition. It is the temper of the devil to
 grudge happiness to others ; he envied that man should
 be in paradise when he was cast out of heaven.

most glorious titles, as the brightest gem in the crown, "the Lord, mighty to save;" he delights to shew his sovereignty in ruining the innocent, and destroying helpless creatures; that is the property of a tyrannical reign upon earth: cruel and arbitrary, they think they never exert their dignity with so much glory as when it is exercised in acts of severity and blood; if mischief was inseparable from power; but God shines in relieving the helpless and innocent, and the devil belongs the title of "the destroyer."

Without the quality of goodness, all other perfections would change their nature, and lose their excellence. Great power and wisdom would be terrible, and excite nothing but dread and suspicion in us. Power without goodness, is tyranny and oppression, and wisdom without goodness, is craft and treachery. It is needless to reduce to an example. A being endued with knowledge and power, and yet wanting goodness, would be nothing less than an irresistible evil, and an omnipotent mischief. We admire knowledge, and are afraid of power, and respect wisdom; but we can heartily love nothing but goodness, or such perfections as are in conjunction with it: for knowledge and power may be in a nature contrary to God; the devil has these perfections in the highest degree. When all is done, nothing appears but a great and generous mind but only goodness, which

generally in us the worst part of the levellers
 es; and though we can very contentedly behold
 des below us, yet are we impatient to see any
 ; not only the "foot complains that it is not the
 at the ear because it is not the eye." Not only
 most but the higher ranks of men are uneasy, if
 any one step above them. Nay, so importu-
 his aspiring humour, that we see men are forced
 t, though but with air and shadows. He that can-
 ce any real advance in his quality, will yet do
 gy, in all little gaieties and pageantries of it;
 he cannot effect so much as that, that canker,
 naws his heart, and feeds upon his very vitals.
 men have created wants, merely out of envy of
 ens abundance. Lucifer was happy enough in
 nal state, yet could not think himself so, because
 not like the most high; and when by that is taken
 a he had forfeited bliss, it has ever since been
 vation of his torment, that mankind is assumed
 acity of it; and accordingly he makes it the
 F his envious industry to defeat him. How per-
 e the two first parts of this copy transcribed by
 ho first cannot be satisfied with any inferior de-
 vourship, and then what their impatience with
 ens enjoyment of what they cannot attain; it
 uch to be doubted, that they who go thus far,
 pleat the parallel; and endeavour, when they
 portunity, to undermine that happiness they
 Therefore since the devil is so apt to impress
 e image, where he has drawn any of his strength
 it constrains us warily to guard ourselves, and
 ous sympathy with our brethren, to make the
 of others an ally, not an impediment, and
 ous: charity, the virtue we live in hope
 of, has a strange almighty power, and we
 e concerns of our brethren as its, for pleasure
 breast can never be contented with its own
 in as happy; for by loving our brethren

he shares in their joys: Jethro, though an alien, “ced for all the good God had done to Israel;” why should not we have as sensible a concurrence our fellow Christians? He who has so, will find thing to balance his own sufferings.

One would think that so painful and so impetuous as envy, should not be so prevalent; but for the pride of man’s heart, that it cannot easily be brought to be in humour with subjection of any kind; and are commonly so favourable to ourselves, as to magnify in our own imagination, the loss of those advantages we envy in others; which vanity will go a great way to take off the rancour of this vice, where religion and virtue have not suppressed it.



D E T R A C T I O

I Believe there is hardly a man living, who is least conversant with men or things past or present, either in life or in history, but will acknowledge that detraction was never carried to such extravagance as it has been lately with us in England. Hints have been given of it in the foregoing pages. I shall now consider this vice more fully, and expose the guilt and the mischief of it, which will be doubly confirmed by all our experiences.

In doing this it will be necessary to discourse of detraction in all the parts of it, as well that of the tongue as that of the pen. And if there be those who stretch their mouths against heaven, we are not to wonder if there be more that will shoot their arrows

DETACHMENT 20

...and the ...
...and the ...
...and the ...
...and the ...

A building is a fine structure, and it is important that it is made up of the right material. All right about the way to construct a building is like, and the first step is to find out what the building is made of. It is important to find out what the building is made of, and to find out what the building is made of.

They are, I think, not untypical of the
d by comparing the two. In the first case, the
s, the very nature of the argument is to
their faith, the two are not the same. The
marks a new beginning and a new era of
ernity, & the only one that can be
ethics, pure and simple. It is a new
or freedom as a result of the fact that we
ought to be the same as we are.

[illegible]

N. 229

ces against the
ch will always
invaded. To
times the very
ces them really
roe reputation
reedy catching

te, and passion
ing this interest
commerce; such
the sober. We
the stupid part
ist this wound
Christianity do
at none of those
be attempted,
he inflictor. It
nce and meek-
as not the less
for that is
erson injured;
mediate aven-
wn. But if the
is very likely
attracts another
not only for its
evil which it
is robbed not
so, provoked
God also into
with heaven
judgment by
impatient
is look-
this

Interest. It is true, many have improved this too far, blown up this spark into such flames of ambition as have set the world into a combustion ; such as Alexander, Cæsar, and others, who sacrificed Hecatombs to their fame, fed it up to a prodigy upon a cannibal diet, the flesh of men. In our days we have seen the chief reason for the most unjust and bloody wars has been wound up in the single phrases of our honour and our glory ; yet even these excesses serve to evince the universal consent of mankind, that reputation is a valuable and desirable thing. Nor have we only the suffrage of men, but the attestation of God himself : “ a good name “ is better than great riches : again, a good name is better “ than precious ointment.” And the more to recommend it, he proposes it as a reward to piety and virtue, as he menaces the contrary to wickedness ; “ the memory of the “ just shall be blessed, but the name of the wicked shall “ rot.” Accordingly good men have in their estimate ranked their names in the next degree to their souls, preferred them before goods or life. Indeed it is that which gives an inferior sort of immortality, and makes us even in this world survive ourselves ; this part of us alone continues verdant in the grave, and yields perfume when we are stench and rottenness : the consideration whereof has so prevailed with the more generous heathens, that they have chearfully quitted life in contemplation of it.

The love of liberty and glory has been always blessed with the applause of posterity, however it may be depressed in the pursuits of it. Tyranny and the creatures of tyrants despise that good name, whose odor is richer than the richest perfumes ; they being black themselves, desire nothing but to blacken others ; they confound fame and infamy, they indulge their lust of power, and look on every thing else as insipid or ridiculous ; they are insensible of shame, and do not care what any tongue can say of them, as long as they can cut it out for it. But as these are monsters in morality, so
nothing



1. Administrative
 2. General
 3. Personnel
 4. Finance
 5. Legal
 6. Medical
 7. Education
 8. Research
 9. Public Relations
 10. Other

such a mixture of severity and
encourage them to grow
them into desperations of
vain in their manner of giving
measure of it, if they would
ries of God's providence is
of alms and charities to his
rity that founded this vast
world, that stocked it with
creatures, and endowed it
for the support and maintenance
of us live upon his alms, and
charity for every breath of
of bread we eat, and for every
Indeed what are all the good
many arguments of his infinite
where about nature, consider
providence, survey all the
hands, you shall find them all
character given of him by the
and doest good." In relieving
others we act the part, and the
mighty Father of beings, who
table, and carves to his whole
man "is a God to the unfortunate
of God; for man has in nothing

can be argued from their practices against the opinion of all honest men. Such will always attend when their reputation is invaded. To anger, to what guilt, does sometimes the very reproach hurry men? It makes them really that virtue from whence all true reputation, and lose the substance by too greedy catching shadow.

The reason sets fame at so high a rate, and passion higher, we may conclude the violating this interest the greatest injuries in human commerce; such resented not only by the rash but the sober. We pick out only blocks and stones, the stupid part kind, if we think we can inflict this wound without smart. And though the powers of Christianity do so moderate this resentment, that none of those shall recoil, no degree of revenge be attempted, it does not at all justify or excuse the inflictor. It indeed be a useful trial of the patience and meekness of the defamed, yet the defamer has not the less of crime or danger: not of crime, for that is enhanced by the goodness of the person injured; danger, since God is the more immediate avenger of those who attempt not to be their own. But if the injured meets not with this meekness, as it is very likely not in this vindictive age, it then contracts another relative guilt, stands answerable not only for its positive ill, but for all the accidental which it does to the sufferer, who by this means is robbed not of his reputation, but his innocence too, provoked to unchristian returns which draw God also into wrath, and set him at once at war with heaven and earth. And though as to his immediate judgment he may bear his iniquity, and answer for his impatience, in all civil insurrections the ringleader is looked on with a particular severity, so doubtless in this case the provoker has by his seniority and primogeni-
double portion of the guilt, and may consequently
expect

expect part of the punishment, according to the doom of our Saviour, "Woe be to that man by whom the offence cometh."

What a train of mischiefs usually follows this sin of detraction! it is scarce possible to make a full estimate of its malignity: It is one of the grand incendiaries which disturbs the peace of the world, and has a great share in most of its quarrels. For could we examine all the feuds which harass persons, families, nay, sometimes nations too, we should find the greater part take their rise from injurious reproachful words. In regard therefore of the proper guilt of this vice, and all those remoter sins and miseries which come after it, it is every man's great concern to watch over himself; neither is it less in respect of that universal aptness we have to this sin, and its being so perpetually at hand, that for others we must attend occasions and seasons, but the opportunities of this are always ready: I can do my neighbour this injury when I can do him no other. Besides, the multitude of objects do proportionably multiply both the possibilities and occasions, and the objects here are as numerous as there are persons in the world I either know or have heard of. For though some sort of detraction seem confined to those to whom we bear particular malice, yet there are other kinds of it more ranging, which fly indifferently at all. This sin has the aid of almost universal example, which is an advantage beyond all the other, there being scarce any so irresistible insinuation as the practice of those with whom we converse, and no subject of converse so common as the defaming our neighbours. There are two kinds of spreading defamatory reports, either false or true; which though they seem to be of different complexions, yet may spring from the same stock, and drive at the same designs. The spreading of false defamatory reports admits of various circumstances: sometimes a man invents a perfect falsity of another; sometimes he that does not invent it, yet reports it, though he knows it to be false; and a third sort there.

ire, who having not certain knowledge whether it be or no, do yet divulge it as an absolute certainty, fraught with such artificial insinuations as may bias the opinion on that head: the former of these is a crime of which, so disingenuous a nature, that though many are bold enough to commit, none are so impudent to avow it.

In this age of insulting vice, when almost all dishonesty appears barefaced, this is fain to keep on guard. No man will own himself a false accuser; modesty do not restrain him, yet his very malice since to confess would be to defeat his design. Indeed the most diabolical of all other sins, it being a conjunction of two of the devil's most essential properties, malice and lying: we know it is his peculiar to be the accuser of the brethren; and when we ascribe his copy, we also assume his nature, intitle ourselves to a descent from him: "ye are of your father the devil," we are by it a sort of incubus brats, the base progenies of the lying spirit. It is indeed as gross and so formidable a bulk, that there needs the help of opticks to render it discernible.

The next degree is not much short of it, what it wants of invention than malice; for he that will so taint another's lye, shews he would willingly have been a proper father: it does indeed differ no more than the counter of adulterate wares does from the vender of it; and certainly there cannot be a more ignominious trade than the being hucksters to such vile merchandise.

In which the public libellers of our times are the most notorious dealers. They do, it is true, invent of their own, as well as report other mens scandal; but whether their own, or others, they vend it, when they know it to be false, to those whose interest they think it would serve to have it true. The sin of this is not less than the others. We find the lover of a lye ranked in an equal degree of guilt with the maker; and surely he must be accounted to love it that can descend to be the broker, and help it to pass current in the world.

The

guilt both of deceit and malice, but it is so
it will do neither. For if they are affected if
they are so willing it should be true, that they
attempted to examine it. It does not suffice th
know the falsity, for to make me a true speak
cessary I know the truth of what I affirm. N
thing were never so true, yet, if I knew it no
its truth will not secure me from being a
therefore whoever endeavours to have that re
a certainty, which himself knows not to be f
against truth. The utmost that can consist v
rity, is to represent it to others as doubtful as
to him; yet even that, as consonant as it
truth is not charity. Even doubtful accusat
a stain behind them, and often prove indelib
to the party accused; how much more then de
positive and confident aspersions we have hithe
of? Those who spread this doubtful calumny a
advancers of defamatory designs than the first
For they, upon a consciousness of their falsene
liged to proceed cautiously, to pick out the cre
least discerning persons, on whom to impose the
and dare not produce them in all companies
detection; but these, in confidence that the u
it be one, lies not at their door, speak it wi
restraint in all places. at all times: and what

If we apply these practices to our rule of duty, there will need no very close inspection to discern the obliquity. The most superficial glance will evidence these several degrees of slanderers to do what they would not be willing to suffer: who among them can be content to be falsely aspersed? Nay, so far are they from that, that let but the shadow of their own calumny reflect on themselves, let any but truly tell them that they have falsely accused others, they grow raving and impatient, like a dog at a looking-glass, combating that image which himself creates; and how smoothly soever the original lye slides from them, the echo of it grates their ears. It is observable, that those who make the greatest havock of other mens reputation, are the most nicely tender of their own; which sets this sin of defamation in a most diametrical opposition to the evangelical precept of "loving our neighbours as ourselves." Thus much is discernible even in the surface of the crime; but if we look deeper, and examine the motives, we shall find the foundation well agrees to the superstructure, they being actually one of these two, malice or interest. The thing is so disingenuous, so contrary to the dictates of humanity, as well as divinity, that I must, in reverence to our common nature, presume, that nothing but a very forcible impulse could drive a man so far from himself. The devil here plays the artist, and as the fatale poisons to men are, they say, drawn from human bodies, so here he extracts the venom of the irascible and concupiscible part, and in it dips those arrows which we thus shoot at one another.

Malice is the whirlwind which has shaken states and families, no less than private persons; a passion so impetuous and precipitate, that it often equally involves the agent and the patient; a malicious man being of like violence, with those who flung the three children into the fiery furnace, consumed by those flames into which he cast others. As for interest, it is the universal monarch to which all other empires are tributaries;

to

to which men sacrifice, not only their conscience and innocence, but what is usually much dearer, their sensualities and vices: those, whom all the divine, either threats or promises, cannot persuade to mortify, nay but restrain one lust, at mammon's beck will disclaim many, and force their inclinations to comply with their interest.

While this sin of calumny has two such potent abettors, we are not to wonder at its growth. As long as men are malicious and designing, they will be traducing. Those cyclopes will be perpetually forging thunderbolts, against which no innocence or virtue can be proof. And, alas, we daily find too great effect of their industry: but though these are the forgers of the more solemn deliberate calumnies, yet this sportive age has produced another sort, there being men that defame others out of wantonness; invent little stories, that they may find themselves exercise, and the town talk. This, if it must pass for sport, is such as Solomon describes, "as a mad-man that casteth firebrands, arrows" "and death, so is he that deceiveth his neighbour, and "saith, am not I in sport?" He who shoots an arrow in jest, may kill a man in earnest; and he who gives himself the liberty to play with his neighbour's fame, may soon play it away. Most men are so ready to entertain ill opinions of others, that they greedily draw in any suggestion of that kind; and one may as easily persuade the thirsty earth to refund water she has sucked into her veins, as them to deposite a prejudice they have once taken up. These jocular slanders are often as mischievous as those of deeper design; and the slightness of the temptation aggravates the guilt: for sure he who can put such an interest of his neighbour's, in balance with a little fit of laughter, sets it at a lower price, than he who hopes to enrich or advance himself by it. Though it may pass among some for a specimen of wit, yet it really leaves them among Solomon's fools, "who made a mock at sin."

Slander

ilder is a plant that grows in all soils. The fro-
 ne humour as well as the morose betrays to the
 Who can hope to escape this scourge of the tongue,
 wise man has it, and this, flail of the press? Per-
 all ranks do mutually asperse, and are aspersed.
 reat give patronage and encouragement; and the
 nadly run into that, which turns so much to their
 ind their pleasure. He who would not have his
 ty abused, has scarce a securer way than, like
 brologer, who made his almanack give a tolerable
 t of the weather, by a direct inversion of the
 on prognostications, to let his belief run quite
 y to reports. This disease is grown so epide-
 that even religion has got a taint of it; each
 on and opinion endeavouring to represent its
 nist as odious as it can; and while they contend
 culative truth, they by mutual calumnies, for-
 practice: a thing which justly excites the grief
 l men, to see that those, who pretend all to the
 Christianity, should only be unanimous in the vio-
 that truth and charity it prescribes.

se religious debates, far unworthy such an epithet,
 ie to such a degree of irreligion, that it has given
 n to unbelievers, to make a jest of our holy doc-
 self. Can there be any thing, they cry, in a re-
 the professors of which break through all the rules
 contentions about indifferent matters? Charity
 um of all, and that was never so much broken
 as it has been in our times. If these be the
 s of our spiritual warfare, what may we think
 arnal? How are our secular animosities purified,
 ur speculations are thus managed? How easily
 un down the reputation of any, who stand in
 either of our spleen or avarice?

ere can be no true religion, without charity; so
 n be no true human prudence, without bearing
 descension. This rule will direct us, who are of
 lished church, in our carriage towards those that
 dis-

again; nor no hard words to sharpen their
and make a perpetual bar to unity. But whe
a disposition in the contending parties, to bea
another, to speak well of one another, and pu
that fire of contention, which the mouths
men have blown into so terrible a flame?

Not only pious men, but piety itself parta
same fate in the insults of slander; and he
merry humour to gratify, cares not whethe
the expence of his religion, neighbour's r
or at that of religion itself.

How great madness is it to make so costly
so vile an idol as calumny? It is indeed the w
our own imaginations; preferring a malicious
fore a real felicity; which is but faintly res
him, who is said to have chosen to part with l
sick, rather than burn his romance. Are ther
corporal sins enough to ruin us? Must we hav
too? Damn ourselves with chimeras, and by
geries of our brains, dream ourselves to desti

Let all those then, who thus unhappily en
investive faculty, timely consider, how un
trade it is likely to prove; that all their fal
sions of others, will rebound in true ones u
selves. It does often so in the world, whe

DETRACTION. 237

a lower form of guilt than the former; yet, kind, they equally agree in the definition of it; since a man's credit may be impaired, as well by reports as by false ones. Though every fault have real effects which are coetaneous to the act, yet infamy is not so; this is a more remote consequence which it immediately depends upon, is the stigma. A man may do things, which to God and conscience are abominable, and yet keep his honour with men; but when this stifled crime breaks open his secret guilts are detected, then, and not before, he becomes infamous. Thus, though his sin be venial, yet it is the discovery that is the formal cause of infamy. It follows therefore, that he who discovers an unknown concealed fault, stands accountable for the consequences which flow from that divulging; he is as accountable as for guilt, must be determined by the particular circumstances of the cause. We do not admit of an exception; for though every discovery of another's fault, be, in the strict natural sense of the word, a detraction, yet it will not always be the detraction; because in some instances, there may be other obligations intervene, and supersede what is due to the fame of our neighbour. In those cases it is not only be lawful, but necessary to expose him. It often falls out, that by concealing one man's fault, it is injurious to another, nay, to a whole community. When I assume the guilt I conceal; and, by the wrath of God and man, am judged an accessory. Justice to others enforces, so sometimes justice to self, allows the publishing of a fault, where there is a considerable interest either of fame or fortune, which may otherwise be rescued. But to make loud outcry when they find nothing to the redress of their party rather than to satisfy their impatience. It is not to be justified by justice. In that case, the person is the most injured. For he is injured in his reputation. For he is the subject of some trivial

of his, which is invaded, he assaults the other in a interest, by wounding him in his good name. the cause be considerable, and the manner regular, lies no sure obligation upon any man to wrong in indulgence to another. Neither does charity require this liberty; for though it be one act of charity to conceal another man's fault, yet many times it may be consistent with some more important charity, we owe to a third person, or perhaps to a multitude, those cases wherein public benefit is concerned. were not allowable, no history could lawfully be written, since, if true, it cannot but relate the faults of men; no evidence could be brought in against a malefactor, and indeed, all discipline would be inverted, which be so great a mischief, that charity obliges to prevent whatever defamation falls upon the guilty by it: in such instances, it is a true rule, that mercy to the guilty proves cruelty to the innocent: and as in a competition of mischiefs, we are to choose the least; so of two evils, the greatest and most extensive is the most eligible. That charity, which reflects even upon myself, also sometimes supersede that to my neighbour; though not obliging me to love him better than myself. I do not surely silently assent to my own unjust defamation for fear of proving another a false accuser; nor suffer myself to be made a beggar, to conceal another man's fault, as a thief. It is true, in a great inequality of interests, charity, whose character is "not to seek her own," prompts me to prefer a greater concern of my neighbour's before a slight one of my own; but in equal circumstances I am sure I am at liberty to be kind to myself: if I will recede even from that, I may, but it is then to be accounted among the heroick flights of charity, not her binding and indispensable laws.

When it is remembered how common the breach of justice and charity are now grown in the world, must certainly impute such incessant effects to some very serious causes, of which it may not be amiss to point

is of the most obvious. One of the principal ingredients in defamation is pride; a humour, which as it is always mounting, so it will make use of any footstool towards its rise. A man who effects an extraordinary ascent of reputation, is glad to find any foils to set him off; and therefore will let no fault or folly of another enjoy the shade, but bring it into the open light; that by the comparison, his own excellencies may appear the brighter. I dare appeal to the breast of any proud man, whether he does not upon such occasions, make some pharisaical reflexions upon himself; whether he is not apt to say, "I am not like other men, or as this publican," though probably he leaves out the, "God, I thank thee." He who cherishes such sentiments as these in himself, will doubtless be willing to propagate them to other men; and to that end render the blemishes of others as visible as he can. But this betrays a degenerate spirit, which from a consciousness that he wants solid worth, on which to build a reputation, is fain to build it upon the ruin of other mens. The true diamond sparkles even in the sun-shine; but that virtue is a sort of glow-worm brightness, which owes its lustre to the darkness about it.

Envy is another promoter to detraction, sometimes it is particular, sometimes general. He who has a pique to another, would have him as hateful to all mankind as he is to him; and therefore as he repines at any thing which makes him more esteemed, so he exults in anything which depresses him, and is usually very industrious to improve the opportunity. He has a strange sagacity in hunting it out. No vulture does more quickly scent a carcase than an envious person does these dead flies, which corrupt his neighbour's ointment, whose vapour, like a strong wind, is by his heat scattered, and dispersed far and near. Nor needs he any great crime to practise on: very little infirmity or passion looked on through his optics, appears a mountainous guilt. He can improve the least speck or freckle into a leprosy, which shall over-
spread

There are some tempers so malign that they will all, and believe ill of all; like Timon of Athens, who professed himself an universal man-hater. He whose conscience reflects dismal images of himself, is apt to put the same ugly shape upon the whole nation, to conclude that all men are the same, were they closely inspected: Wherefore, when he can see the least glimmering of a fault in any, he takes it as a confirmation of his supposition, and with an envious joy counts up many spectators as he can. It is certain there are many in whose ears nothing sounds so harsh as the censure of another; and nothing, on the contrary, so melodious as a defamation. Plutarch gives an instance of this upon Aristides's banishment; whom, when a person had proposed to ostracism, being asked what pleasure Aristides had done him? He replied, neither do I know him, but it grieves me to hear even call him a just man. I fear some of our keenest now-a-days may give the same answer. Any man eminent for piety, or indeed moral virtue, shall have invidious eyes upon him, watching for his fault; if any the least obliquity can be spied, he is used as a criminal, rather than the vilest malefactor: for such are tried by the public bar, and know the utmost of their doom; but the good man is arraigned at every table in every tavern. At

There is another sort of detractors, whose designs are not so black, but are mean and sordid, much too light to be put in balance with a neighbour's credit. Of these, some will pick up all the little stories they can get to humour a patron; an artifice well known by these trencher-guests, who like rats, still haunt the best provisions. These men do almost come up to the literal sense of what the Psalmist spoke in a figurative, 'they eat up people for bread,' tear and worry a man in his good name, that themselves may eat. It was a curse denounced against Eli's offspring, "that they should come and crouch for a morsel of bread." But such men court this as a preferment; and to bring themselves within the reach of it, stick not to assume that vile office of common delators. There are others, who, when they have got the knowledge of another man's faults, think it an endearing thing to whisper them in the ear of some friend or confidant. But surely if they must needs sacrifice some secret to their friendship, they should take David's rule, and "not offer that which cost them nothing." If they will express their confidence, let them acquaint them with their own private crimes; that indeed will shew something of trust; but those experiments upon another man's cost, will hardly convince any considerable person of their kindness.

A more trifling sort of defamers than even these, are those who have no deliberate design which they pursue in it, yet are as assiduous at the trade, as the deeper contrivers. Such are those who publish their neighbour's failings as they read gazettes, only that they may be telling news; an itch which some people's tongues are strangely over-run with, who can as well hold a glowing coal in their mouths, as keep any thing they think new. They will sometimes run themselves out of breath, for fear any should serve them as Ahimaaz does Cushi, and tell the tale before them. This is one of the most childish vanities imaginable; and sure men must have souls of a very low level that can think it a commen-

selves out of their own store, and therefore foreign accession pass by them, no more which is always going can afford any waste. I know we use to call this talkat minine vice; but to speak impartially, I think we have given that sex the inclosure of they have not all the fault; and he that shate loquacity to women, seems to overlook of his own sex; for it is possible to go in company, where it will be as hard to edge as at a female gossiping. However, as cular of defaming, both the sexes seem to and I think he were a very critical judge to termine between them.

But lest the latter of these defamers should absolve themselves, as men of harmless shall desire them to consider, that they are impertinent, not less injurious. For thought, that the proud and envious are to make count for their pride and envy, yet as far their neighbour, they are equally mischievous, that was choked with a grape-stone, only as Julius Cæsar with his three and twenty and a man's reputation may be as well foisted away, as maliciously betrayed, perhaps

contradiction to them; for where they do not upon some particular respects command, they do implicitly and generally forbid all such discoveries. If the fault divulged be of a light nature, the offender cannot merit so much by it, as to be made a public discourse. Fame is a tender thing, and is seldom tost and bandyed without receiving some bruise, if not a crack. Reports, like snow-balls, gather still the farther they roll; and when I have once handed it to another, what assurance have I that he will not improve it? And if he deliver it so advanced to a third, he may also give his contribution to it; and so, in a successive transmitting, it may grow to such a monstrous bulk, as bears no proportion to its original. He must be a great stranger to the world, that has not experimentally found the truth of this. How many persons have lain under great and heavy scandals, which have taken their first rise only from inadvertence or indiscretion? Of so quick a growth is slander, that the least grain, like that of mustard-seed, immediately shoots up into a tree; and when it is so, it can no more be reduced back into its first cause, than a tree can shrink into that little seed from whence it sprang. No ruins are so irreparable as those of reputation, and therefore he who puts out but one stone, towards the breach, may do a greater mischief than perhaps he intends, and a greater injustice too; for by how much the more strictly justice obliges us to reparation, in case of injuries done, so much the more severely does it prohibit the doing such injuries as are irreparable. No considering man can be ignorant how apt even little trivial accusations are to tear and mangle one's fame, and if yet the lavish talker restrains them not, he certainly stands accountable to God, his neighbour, and his own conscience, for all the danger they procure.

If the report concern; some higher and enormous crime, it is true the delinquent may deserve the less pity; yet perhaps the reporter may not deserve the less blame;

yet, by the check of that shame, recover again when by a public detection he is fallen under a family he feared, he will then be apt to discard all and think he owes himself the utmost pleasure in vice, as the price of his reputation. Perhaps he advances still farther, and sets up for a reversionist for by being eminently wicked, and he who before was a clandestine disciple, becomes a doctor of it. And sure it were better to let a concealed crime in its wished obscurity, than by this rousing and covert bring it to stand at bay, and set itself in open defiance, especially in this degenerate age, where vice has so many well-wishers; that like a hoplite they eagerly run into any that will head them.

The divulging of private crimes, especially if they be novel and unusual, does but an ill piece of service to the public. Vice is contagious, and casts poisonous vapours, and as he that should bring out a pest of the plague, to inform the world of his danger, would be thought not to have much befriended his neighbourhood; so he that displays these vicious ulcers, he seeks to defame one, may perhaps infect many. Men too experimentally find the force of bad example. Men frequently take up sins, to which they have a natural propension, merely by way of conformity or imitation: but if the instance happens in a crime

correspond with the justice and charity we owe either to particular persons, or to mankind in general. And indeed no better can be expected from a practice, which so perfectly contradicts the grand rule both of justice and charity, "the doing as we would be done by:" that this does so, every man has already conviction with him, if he pleases but to consult his own heart. With what solicitude do we seek to hide our own guilt? What false dresses have we for it? What varnishes? There are not more arts of disguising our corporeal blemishes, than our moral, and yet while we thus paint our own deformities, we cannot allow any the least imperfection of another's to remain undetected, but tear off the veil from their blushing frailties, and not only expose but proclaim them. Can there be a grosser or more detestable partiality than this? God may sure in this instance, as in many others, expostulate with us as he did with Israel, "are not your ways unequal?" What barbarity, what inhumanity is it, thus to treat those of the same common nature with ourselves, whom we cannot but know have the same concern to preserve a reputation, and the same regret to lose it which we have? What a shame is it, that the evangelical precept of "doing as we would be done to," which met with so much reverence from heathens, that Severus the emperor preferred it to all the maxims of philosophers, should be thus contemned and violated by Christians, and that too upon such slight inconsiderable motives as usually prevail in this case of defamation?

We are not to consider this fault in its root only, as it is a defect of justice and charity, but in its product too, as it is a seminary of more injustice and uncharitableness. The disadvantageous reports we make of our neighbours are almost seen to come round; for let no man persuade himself that the hearers will keep his counsel any better than he does that of the defamed person: the softest whisper of this kind will find others to echo it, until it reach the ears of the concerned party, and perhaps too with some aggravating circumstances.

All malicious enquires are made into one manners, and these things which perhaps th closets, come to be proclaimed upon the h Thus the wild-fire runs round, until sometime but blood will quench it; or if it arrives not usually fixes us in an irreconcilable feud. T often cwing those distances we see among fri relations, such strangeness, such animosity neighbours, that you cannot go to one but yo entertained with invectives against the other : too you shall lose both, because you are willin with neither. What account can any man himself, either in Christianity or prudence, th in such a train of mischiefs, merely to grati potent childish humour of telling a tale? F the great legacy Christ left to his followers, a to be guarded, though we expose for it our gre poral concerns, but cannot without despite to well as our brethren, be thus prostituted.

If we consider detraction abstractedly from th solemn mischiefs which attend it, the mere l unworthiness of it sets it below an ingenuci We generally think a tatler and busy-body no small reproach, and to whom does it m belong than to those, who busy themselves firrt ing then in publishing the faults of others?

their impotence cannot afford excuse for it, what a debasement is it of mens nobler faculties, to be thus entertained? The historian gives it as an ill indication of Domitian's temper, that he employed himself in catching and tormenting flies; and sure they fall not under a much better character, either for wisdom, or goodness, who thus snatch up all the little fluttering reports they can meet with, to the prejudice of their neighbours.

Besides this divulging the faults of others, there is another branch of detraction naturally springing from this root, and that is censuring, and severe judging of them. We think we have not well played the historians when we have told a thing, unless we add also our remarks and animadversions upon it. 'Though God knows, it is bad enough to make a naked relation, and trust it to the severity of the hearers: yet few can content themselves with that, but must give them a sample of rigour, and by the bitterness of their own censure, invite them to pass the like; a process contrary to all rules of law or equity, for the plaintiff to assume the part of a judge. And we may easily divine the fate of that man's fame who is so unduly tryed. Indeed it is sad to see how many private tribunals are every where set up, where we scan and judge our neighbours actions, but scarce ever acquit any; we take up with the most incompetent witnessses; nay, frequently suborn our own surmises and jealousies, that we may be sure to cast the unhappy criminal. How nicely and scrupulously do we examine every circumstance, (would to God we were but half so exact in our own penitential Inquisitions) and torture it, to make it confess something which appears not in the more general view of the fact, and which perhaps never was in the actor's intentions? In a word, we do, like witches in their magical chymistry, extract all the venom, and take none of the allay. By this means we confound the degrees of sins, and sentence deliberate and indeliberate, a habit or an act, all at one rate,

that is commonly, at the utmost it can amount to, even in its worst acceptation. And surely this were a most culpable corruption in judgment, could we shew our commission to judge our brethren: but we may here, every one of us ask ourselves in our Saviour's words, "who made me a judge?" If he disclaimed it, who in respect of his divinity had the supreme right, and that too in a case, wherein one at least of the litigants had desired his interposition, what a boldness is it in us to assume it, where no such appeal is made to us; but on the contrary, the party disowns our authority? which is superseded by our great law-giver in that express prohibition, "judge not," backed with a severe penalty, "that ye be not judged." As God has appropriated vengeance to himself, so has he judicature also, and it is an invasion of his peculiar, for any, but his delegates, the lawful magistrates, to pretend to either. Indeed in all private judgments, so much depends upon the intention of the offenders, that unless we could possess ourselves of God's omniscience, it will be as irrational as impious to assume this authority: until we know mens hearts, we are at best but imperfect judges of their actions. At our rate of judging, St. Paul had surely past for a most malicious persecutor, whereas God saw he did it ignorantly in unbelief, and had mercy on him. The same apostle gives this good counsel, "judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come." For though it is said, the saints shall judge the world, yet it must be at the great assize, and he that will needs intrude himself into the office before the time, will be in danger to be rather passive than active in that great and solemn judicatory. By these reflexions we do not intend to advance such a stupid charity, as shall make no distinction of actions; there is a wee pronounced, as well to those who call evil good, as good evil: when we see an open notorious sin committed, we may express a detestation of the crime, though not of the actor. This may sometimes be a necessary charity, both to the offender, and to the innocent spectators,

Stators, as an amulet to keep them from the con-
 sion of the example. But still, even in these cases,
 sentence must not exceed the evidence, we must
 go only according to the visible undoubted circum-
 stances, and not aggravate the crime upon conjectures
 and presumptions: if we do, how right soever our
 offices may be, our judgment is not, but we are, as
 James speaks, "Judges of evil thoughts." This rash
 judging is not only very unjust both to God and man,
 but it is an act of the greatest pride. When we set our-
 selves in the tribunal, we always look down with con-
 tempt on those at the bar; and certainly there is nothing
 so gratify a haughty humour, as this piece of
 assumed sovereignty over our brethren; but the more it
 is so, the greater necessity there is to abstain from it.
 Pride is a hardy kind of vice, that will live upon the
 best pasture; how little need is there then of pam-
 pering it? Which we cannot more effectually do, than
 this censorious humour, by which we are so perpe-
 tually employed abroad, that we have no leisure to look
 inward, and see our own defects. We are, like the
 inhabitants of Ai, so eager upon our pursuit of others,
 that we leave ourselves exposed to the ambushes of Sa-
 tan, who will be sure still to encourage us in our chase,
 to draw us still farther and farther from ourselves, and
 does not how zealous we are in fighting against the
 enemies of others, so he can but keep that zeal from
 oiling upon our own.

It is plain to every one at the very first reflexion, that
 the vice of detraction must needs be quite opposite to
 the virtue of charity, which "thinks no evil," is not apt
 to make severe constructions, but sets every thing in the
 best light, putting the most candid interpretations up-
 on them that they will bear, which is of great impor-
 tance to the reputation of our neighbours. The world,
 we know, is in many instances extremely governed by
 opinion; but in this it is all in ail; it has not only an
 influence upon it, but is that very thing; reputation

people take up prejudice, as they do religious trust; and of those that are more curious in into the grounds, there are not many who va more charitable hand. Men are apt to thin d.sparagement to their invention, if they something as sharp upon the subject as has before: so it is the business of many to la load, but of few to take it off.

As this is very uncharitable, in respect of offered, so also is it in regard of the grand rity. Can we pretend to love our neighb selves, and yet shall our love to him have the trary effects to that we bear ourselves? True more sincere: it does not turn to us the rev the perspective, to represent our own faults tance, and in the most diminutive size, wh fles the other to us, when we are to view his. by one measure and sell by another, is not mo than it is to have these differing standards f and our neighbour's faults, that our own f. lighter than vanity, yea nothing, and yet his Zachary's talent of lead.

This is such a partiality, as consists not wi honesty, and can therefore never be recon Christian charity; and how demurely soeve

tence of St. Paul is very applicable, "therefore thou art inexcusable, O man! whosoever thou art that judgest, for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself, for thou that judgest dost the same thing". But suppose a man has not the very same sins censured in another, yet it is sure every man has some, of what sort soever they be, he desires not they should rigorously scanned, and therefore by the rule of charity and justice too, ought not to do that which he would not suffer. If he can find extenuations for his own crimes, he is, in all reason, to presume others may have some for theirs: the common frailty of our nature, as it is apt alike to betray us to faults, so it gives us an equal share in the excuse; and therefore what I would have pass for the excuse of impotence or inadvertence in myself, I can, with tolerable ingenuity, give a worse name to in him.

It has been received among the maxims of civil life, unnecessary to exasperate any body; to which agrees the advice, "speak not evil of thy neighbour; if thou hast lost, thou shalt hear that which will not fail to trouble thee." There is no person so inconsiderable, but may some time or other do a displeasure. In defamation there needs no preparation; every man has his weapon ready for a return, and none can shoot these arrows, but they must expect they will revert with an unbounded force, not only to the violation of Christian unity, but to the aggressor's great secular detriment, both in fame, and frequently in interest. Revenge is sharp-sighted, and overlooks no opportunity of a retaliation. Who can sufficiently wonder, that a practice, which so hurts our interest of both worlds, should come universally to prevail among us? Yet that it does so, I appeal to the consciences of most, and to the observation of all. What so common topick of discourse is there, as this of backbiting our neighbours? Come in the company of all ages, all ranks, all professions, this is the constant entertainment: and I doubt, he that might shall duly recollect the occurrences of the day.

thalt

shall very rarely be able to say, he has spent it without hearing, or speaking something of this kind. Those who restrain themselves from other liberties, often indulge themselves in this. What, besides an unhappy servility to custom, can possibly reconcile men, who own Christianity, to a practice so widely distant from it? It is true, those that profess themselves men of this world, who design only their portion in this life, may take it up as something conducive, at least seemingly, to their end: but for those who propose higher hopes to themselves, and know that charity is one of the main props to those hopes, how foolishly do they undermine themselves, when they thus act against their principles, and that upon no other authority than that of popular usage? I know men are apt to excuse themselves upon their indignation against vice, and think that their zeal must as well acquit them for the violation of the second table, as it once did Moses for the breaking both. But to such I may answer in Christ's words, "ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of." After all this pretext of zeal, I fear it is but a cheat we put on ourselves. Let men truly search their own breasts, and I doubt the best will find there is something of vanity which lies at the bottom, and that detraction, which is really but the defect of wit, is many times made use of to shew it. He whose wit is so precarious, that it must depend only on the folly or vice of another, had best give over all pretence to it. He who has nothing of his own growth to set before his guests, had better make no invitations, than break down his neighbour's inclosure, and feast them upon his plunder. What am I the worse, if a vain talkative person thinks me reserved; or if he, whose wanton levity is his disease, calls me dull, because I vapour not out all my spirits in froth? Socrates, when informed of some derogating speeches one had used of him behind his back, made only this facetious reply, "let him beat me too when I am absent." He who gets not such an indifference to all the idle censures of men, will be disturbed in all

his transactions ; it being scarce possible to do any thing but there will be descants made on it : And if a man will regard those winds, he must, as Solomon says, “ never sow ;” he must suspend even the necessary actions of common life, if he will not venture them to the being mis-judged by others. He that upon such a despicable motive will violate his duty in one particular, lets the devil gain a main point of him, and can with no good reason deny to do it in others. To speak the truth, there is not a more fertile womb of sin than the dread of ill mens reproach. Other corruptions must be gratified with cost and industry, but the devil in this has no farther trouble, than to laugh men out of their souls. So prolific a vice, therefore had need be weeded out of mens hearts, for if it be allowed the least corner, if it be indulged in this one instance, it will quickly spread itself farther. And after all, this fear of reproach is a meer fallacy, started to disguise a more real cause of fear ; for the greater danger of reproach does indeed lie on that other side. Common estimation puts an ill character upon pragmatical meddling people ; for tho’ the inquisitiveness and curiosity of the hearer may sometimes render such discourse grateful enough to him, yet it leaves in him no good impression of the speaker. “ Whether it be friend or foe, talk not of other mens lives, says the son of Sirach, and if thou canst without offence, reveal them not ; for he heard and observed thee, and when time cometh he will hate thee.” In a word, all considering persons will be ever upon the guard in such company, as foreseeing they will talk no less freely of them than they do of others before them. Nor can the commonness of the guilt obviate the censure, their being nothing more frequent than for men to accuse their own faults in other persons. In this particular, none has so much reason to fear a defamer, as those who are themselves such ; for besides the common prudential motive, their own consciousness gives them an inward alarm, and makes them look for a retribution in the same kind.

kind. Thus, upon the whole matter, we see that no real temptation, even to our vanity, to conform with this uncharitable custom, we being sure to more repute by it, than we can propose to ourselves gain. The being esteemed an ill man, will not be balanced by being thought pleasant ingenious company were one sure of being so. But it is odds that will be acquired by it neither, for the most assiduous bearers, and bitterest revilers, are generally half-witted people: There being nothing more frequently obtainable, than such mens aptness to "speak evil of things they understand not."

Defamation is most scandalous, when it proceeds from men otherwise virtuous. Let not those that repudiated the more inviting sins, shew themselves terrified and bewitched by this; but, instead of submitting to the ill example of others, set a good one to them and endeavour to bring this unchristian custom out of fashion. If they do not, I am sure they will be more deeply chargeable than others; for the more company they have over their other corruptions, the more they witness against themselves. Their remissness willing subjection to this, besides their example of ill, is more ensnaring than other mens, and is a more insinuate easy thoughts of the sin. Men think themselves safe while they follow one of noted piety, an authority of the person often leads them blindfold into his failings. I question not in this particular man encouraged by the liberty they see even good men take. Such therefore have a more accumulative guilt, for they do not only commit, but patronize the fault.

In curing ourselves of this spiritual disease, we should follow the rule of physic to examine the causes, the remedies may be adapted to them. Let every man study his own constitution of mind, and observe what are his particular temptations to this sin of detraction whether any of those I have before mentioned, as pride, envy, levity, &c. or any other which lies deeper,

is only discernible to his own inspection: Let him make his scrutiny, and then accordingly apply himself to correct the sin in its first principle. For as when there is an eruption of humour in any part, it is not cured merely by outward application, but by such alterative medicines as purify the blood: so this leprosy of the tongue will still spread farther, if it be not checked in its spring and source, by the mortifying of those corrupt inclinations which feed and heighten it.

As the rabbies were wont to say, that in every signal judgment which befel the Jews, there was some grain of the golden calf, so I think I may venture to say, that in all detraction there is some mixture of pride. But how can we insult over others, when we are not only under a possibility, but are actually involved in the same guilt? And then, what are all our accusations and bitter censures of others, but indictments and condemnatory sentences against ourselves? 'Though our officious vehemence against another's crime may blind the eyes of men, yet God is not so mocked. As, therefore, when a thief or murderer is detected, it gives an alarm to the whole confederacy; so when we find our own guilts pursued in other mens persons, it is not a time for us to join in the prosecution, but rather, by humble and penitent reflections on ourselves, to provide for our own safety. When therefore we find ourselves, upon any misdemeanour of our brother, ready to mount the tribunal, and pronounce our sentences, lets us first consider, how competent we are for the office, calling to mind the decision Christ once made in the like case, "he that is without sin, let him first cast a stone." Would we but look into our own hearts, we should find so much work for our inquisition and censure, that we should not be at leisure to ramble abroad for it. And therefore as Lycurgus once said to one, who importuned him to establish a popular parity in the state, "do thou, says he, "begin it first in thy own family:" So shall I advise those that will be judging, to practise first at home.

In

In considering the pernicious effects of all moral vices to mankind, we ought to have an especial regard to that sex who want most assistance in arming themselves against them. We have hinted, in the foregoing pages of this article, several instances of the wickedness and dissingenuity of slander, with respect to both sexes: Let us now apply our thoughts particularly to the weaker, which the vanity or partiality of men charge as most guilty of this sin and folly. Curiosity, indeed, generally fills the minds of women, and affords them a large, but empty field of discourse. Inquisitiveness after other peoples concerns will seldom or never agree with silence: those who are commonly desirous of learning a great deal of such news are never resolved to conceal it. Obloquy infallibly makes the sale of what imprudence heaps together. Whatever this be, or let it go which way soever it will, there must needs be some vent for it. The minds of curious persons are like those vessels, which are emptied at the same time one thinks to fill them: a great number of women are mere sieves, of whom let the rest be taught to take heed. That which comes in by the ears, goes out again with them almost as soon by the mouth; because indiscretion, the mistress both of those who speak and of those who hear lightly, does not stop the passage to lies, either at the going out or coming in.

This levity creates a bad opinion of their temper, and gives no very good one of their conscience. People ordinarily judge of them, that they do not so wholly spend their time in hearing what is vain and superfluous, as not to catch at what is evil: The easiness which they shew to believe a fault in another, is looked on as a pretty sure indication that they are themselves guilty of the like: For there are some who hear with delight all kinds of slanders and scandals, who can scarce suffer one to speak advantageously of any; who think by blaming all the world to make an apology for their own crimes, and to give authority to their guilt by
the

ber of criminals. When they hear the virtues commended, they have presently the same passions they have when the fair are courted in their presence.

Young ladies should be made sensible of the excess as the odiousness of this humour. Tell the virtuous will excuse faults, instead of punishing them; that it is, on the other hand, the vicious always pitiless: These think by their feigned modesty to impose upon the world, and would hereby prove how free they are from any knowledge of crime in themselves which they accuse in others. Their deeds give the lie to their words, and this proceeds so very ill, that they are often discredited, instead of being vindicated. Tell them, you their teachers, that the virtuous of their sex are purging vice out of the world by their charity; the libertines banish virtue by their censoriousness: it is that a chaste lady is easily discovered; that would be thought so, but is not; for she unmasks every thing even to the minutest circumstance.

her own wickedness serves her for a pattern wickedly by, her experience and her own instruction teach her to give bad interpretations to the best.

The vicious are always in an alarm; they are afraid, as if all women should abuse their liberty. They cannot imagine that a walk or conversation is innocent; they cannot apprehend why these should not do the same that others have done. If they see a woman doing so, they suppose it to be for lack only of opportunity, not of inclination.

There are some women not so open, who are the mistresses of the art of slander, and use not their tongues in calumniating the virtuous; they will rather be armed with gilded weapons; they disguise their censures under the appearance of praise, and by this means do more harm of another, than they could do with a great deal of unadorned truth.

Great care should be taken to

dren of the very least tendencies to so dishonourable, so base, so dangerous a custom: make them see that they never can be perfect in it, unless they be first cowards, malicious and hypocrites: shew them that nothing is more commendable than to prevent error and vanity in their judgment concerning others, and that nothing will contribute more to the settling of their own reputation than candour and ingenuity, in censuring those of whom they may have occasion to discourse: represent to them, that those who have committed but one sin, ought not therefore to be called vicious, that those who have committed many, may perhaps continue in them no longer: the former are corrected, the latter are changed: tell them farther, they can hardly ever have any assurance, when they speak of any one's wickedness, that they are out of danger of telling a lie; for that there is required but a moment, or even a thought, to make of a sinner a penitent.

Scandal is so ill-natured a vice, that it is a blemish to the softness of the sex, whose distinguishing character it is, or ought to be, to be mild, gentle, and innocent. As to the other part of mankind, scandal is so base a vice, it is below the dignity of his nature, and sinks him almost to the depravity of the damned. One cannot give too many lessons against a crime which is so prevalent. What follows will in a great measure prevent the progress of it, if it be well studied and practised.

Never say evil of any man, but what you certainly know. Whenever you positively accuse and indict any man of any crime, tho' it be in private, and among friends, speak as if you were upon your oath, because God sees and hears you: this not only charity, but justice and regard to truth demand of us. He that credits an ill report, is almost as faulty as the first Inventor of it: for tho' you do not make, yet you commonly propagate a lie. Therefore never speak evil of any upon common fame, which for the most part is false, but almost always uncertain whether it be true or not.

Not

Not but that it is a fault in most cases to report the vil of men which is true, and which we certainly know to be so. But if we cannot prevail to make men wholly abstain from this fault, we would be glad to compound with some persons, and to gain this point of them however, because it would retrench nine parts in ten of the vil speaking that is in the world.

Before you speak evil of any man, consider if he has not obliged you by some real kindness, and then it is a bad return to speak ill of him who has done us good. Consider also whether you may not come hereafter to be acquainted with him, related to him, or obliged by him, whom you have thus injured. And how will you then be ashamed when you reflect upon it, and perhaps have reason also to believe, that he to whom you have done this injury is not ignorant of it?

It is farther to be considered, whether in the change of human things you may not some time or other come to stand in need of his favour, and how incapable this marriage of yours towards him will render you of it: Whether it may not be in his power to revenge a spiteful and needless word by a shrewd turn. If a man makes no conscience of hurting others, yet he should in prudence have some consideration of himself.

We should accustom ourselves to pity the faults of men, and to be truly sorry for them; we then should take no pleasure in publishing them; and this common humanity requires of us, considering the great infirmities of human nature, and that we ourselves also are able to be tempted: Considering likewise how severe punishment every fault and miscarriage is to itself, and how terribly it exposes a man to the wrath of God, both in this world and the other. He is not a good Christian that is not heartily sorry for the faults even of his greatest enemies; and if he be so, he will discover them no farther than is necessary to some good end.

Whenever we hear any man evil spoken of, if we know any good of him, let us say that. It is always the
more

more humane, and the more honourable part, to stand up in the defence and vindication of others, than to accuse and bespatter them. Possibly the good you may have heard of them may not be true, but it is much more probable that the evil you have heard of them is not true neither. However, it is better to preserve the credit of a bad man, than to stain the reputation of the innocent. And if there were any need that a man should be evil spoken of, it is but fair and equal that his good and bad qualities should be mentioned together; otherwise he may be strangely misrepresented, and an indifferent man may be made a monster.

They that will observe nothing in a wise man but his oversights and follies, nothing in a good man but his failings and infirmities, may make a shift to render a very wise and good man very despicable. If one should heap together all the passionate speeches, all the froward and imprudent actions of the best man; all that he had said or done amiss in his whole life, and present it all at one view, concealing his wisdom and virtues; the man in this disguise would look like a mad-man or a fury; and yet if his life were fairly represented, and just in the same manner it was led, and his many and great virtues set over-against his infirmities and failings, he would appear to all the world an admirable excellent person. But how many and great soever any man's ill qualities are, it is but just that with all this heavy load of faults, he should have the due praise of the few real virtues that are in him.

That you may not speak ill of any, do not delight to hear ill of them. Give no countenance to busy-bodies, and those who love to talk of other mens faults; or if you cannot decently reprove them because of their quality, then divert the discourse some other way; or if you cannot do that, by seeming not to mind it, you may sufficiently signify that you do not like it.

Let every man mind himself and his own duty and concernment. Do but endeavour in good earnest to mend

mend yourself and it will be work enough for one man, and leave thee but little time to talk of others. When Plato withdrew from the court of Dionysius, who would fain have had a famous philosopher for his flatterer, they parted in some unkindness, and Dionysius bad him not speak ill of him when he was returned into Greece : Plato told him, he had no leisure for it ; meaning that he had better things to mind, than to take up his thoughts with the faults of so bad a man, so notoriously known to all the world.

Let us set a watch before the door of our lips, and not speak but upon consideration : I do not mean to speak finely, but fitly. Especially, when you speak of others, consider of whom and what you are to speak. Use great caution and circumspection in the matter ; look well about you on every side of the thing, and on every person in the company, before your words slip from you, which, when they are once out of your lips, are for ever out of your power.

Not that men should be sullen in company and say nothing ; or so still in conversation, as to drop nothing but aphorisms, and oracles ; especially among equals and friends. We should not be so reserved, as if we would have it taken for a mighty favour that we vouchsafe to say any thing. If a man had the understanding of an angel, he must be contented to abate something of this excess of wisdom, for fear of being thought cunning. The true art of conversation, if any body can hit upon it, seems to be this, an appearing freedom and openness, with a resolute reservedness, as little appearing as possible. Our chief concern should be to weigh well what we say of others. To this end we should endeavour to get our minds furnished with matter of discourse concerning things useful in themselves, and not hurtful to others. If we have but a mind wise enough and good enough, we may easily find a field large enough, for innocent conversation, such as will harm no body, and yet be acceptable enough to the
better

for the judgment first of all; that is, at the
of revelation and tribulation: and we are ne-
citate it by our present judgment or sentences;
business enough to provide our own account ag-
day: and, as it were, a spiteful folly for in
that were going together to the bar, to spend
in exaggerating each others crimes; so surely
us who are all going towards that dreadful
to be drawing up charges against one another
knows but we may then meet with the fate of
accusee, see him we censured, acquitted, and
condemned. The penitence of the criminal
numbered him among the saints, when our un-
unchristianlike-ness may send us to unquenchabl
“There is one lawgiver, says the apostle, who
save: and to destroy; who art thou that judgest a
I have mentioned another remedy against this
try to make a revulsion of the humour, and dra
another channel. If we must needs be talking
peoples faults, let it not be to defame, but to
them, by converting our detraction and ba
into admonition and fraternal correction. Th
way to extract medicine out of the viper, to
create even this so unhallowed a part of our temp
to turn the ungrateful meddling of a busy bo

but him whom it most concerns. It is a deplorable thing to see how universally this necessary Christian duty is neglected; and to that neglect, we may, in a great degree, impute that strange overflowing of detraction among us. We know the receiving any thing into our charge insensibly begets a love and tenderness to it: a nurse, upon this account, comes frequently to vye kindness with the mother; and would we but take one another thus into our care, and, by friendly vigilance, thus watch over each others souls, it is scarce imaginable what an endearment it would create: such certainly as would infallibly supplant all our unkind reportings, and severe descants upon our brethren: since those can never take place, but when there is at least an indifference, if not an enmity.

Did we suppress all curiosity and inquisitiveness concerning others, we should cut off all supplies from detraction, and by that means subdue it. The king of *Æthiopia*, in a vye of wit with the king of *Ægypt*, proposed it as a problem to him, to drink up the sea; to which he replied, by requiring him first to stop the access of rivers; and he that would drain this other ocean, must take the same course, dam up the avenues of those springs which feed it. He who is always upon the scent, hunting out some discovery of others, will be very apt to invite his neighbour to the quarry; and therefore it will be necessary for him to restrain himself from that range: not like jealous states, to keep spies and pensioners abroad to bring him intelligence; but rather discourage all such officious pickthanks: for the fuller he is of such informations, the more is his pains if he keeps them, and his guilt, if he publishes them. Could men be persuaded to affect a wholsom ignorance in these matters, it would conduce both to their ease and innocence; for it is this itch of the ear, which breaks out at the tongue; and were not curiosity the purveyor, detraction would soon be starved into a tameness.

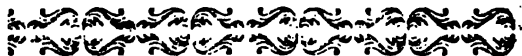
The

check it with this short question, would thus used? The voice from within will be from heaven to St. Paul, which stopp him in of his career: and this voice every man that will not stop his ears, or gag his conscience but the echo of that native justice which is implanted in our hearts; and when our remedy is so near us, and will not use it well expostulate with us, as he did with "Why will ye die, O House of Israel?"

I have mentioned several of those many remedies may be prescribed against this spreading disease, there is not so much need to multiply as to persuade men to apply them. We are loath with our malady, and loth to be cured of the tongue. But it is ill dallying where our lives are concerned: for alas, it is they that are wounded with darts which we throw at others: we take perhaps, at our neighbours, but indeed herein verifying in the highest sense that axiomatic man: "he that diggeth a pit shall fall in it; he that rolleth a stone, it shall return upon himself; if we have no tendernefs, no relentings, yet let us have some to ourselves, so much passion, nay so much respect to our precious

CENSURE and REPROOF. 265

uit; let not our souls exhale in the vapour, but is rather pour them out in prayers for our brethren, in accusation of them: For tho' both the one and other will return into our own bosoms, yet God uses to far different purposes, even as differing as is with which we utter them. The charity of the like kindly exhalations, will descend in showers of blessings; but the rigour and asperity of the other, severe doom upon ourselves: for the apostle will us, "he shall have judgment without mercy, that shewed no mercy."



CENSURE *and* REPROOF.

ALTHOUGH censure has been considered as a branch of detraction; yet it is in many things differing from it, though very little in all.

It is one of the worst characters a man or woman have, to be maliciously curious in examining the sins of others, only to censure them; nothing can equal the quickness of their jealous eye, nor the malignancy of their envenomed tongue: They are the common enemy to mankind and civil society.

Reproof is quite opposite to politeness: If gentlemen and ladies reflected upon the offence all reasonable people take at it, they would not act so vile a part: Base flatterers may applaud their wit, and animate them in calumniating others; but the suffrage of such wretches does not hinder their being despised by persons of honour. There is a great deal of care and skill required in the good management of censure. To distinguish

tinguish is not only natural, but necessary; and the effect of it is, that we cannot avoid giving judgments in our own minds, either to absolve or condemn as the case requires. The difficulty is to know when and where it is fit to proclaim the sentence: an aversion to what is criminal, a contempt of what is ridiculous, are the inseparable companions of understanding and virtue; but the letting them go farther than our own thoughts, has so much danger in it, that though it is neither possible nor fit to suppress them entirely, yet it is necessary they should be kept under very great restraints. An unlimited liberty of this kind, is little less than sending a herald, and proclaiming war to the world, which is an angry beast, when so provoked. The contest will be unequal, though you are never so much in the right; and if you begin against such an old adversary, it will tear you in pieces with this justification, that it is done in its own defence. You must, therefore, take heed of laughing, except in company that is very sure: It is throwing snow-balls against bullets, and it is especially the disadvantage of woman, that the malice of the world will help the brutality of those who will throw a slovenly untruth upon her. The sex should, for this reason, suppress their impatience at fools; who, besides that they are too strong a party to be unnecessarily provoked, are of all others the most dangerous in this case. A blockhead, in his rage, will return a dull jest that will lie heavy, though there is not a grain of wit in it. Others will do it with more art: and you must not think yourself secure, because your reputation may perhaps be out of the reach of ill-will; for if it finds that part guarded, it will seek one which is more exposed. It flies, like a corrupt humour in the body, to the weakest part. If you have a tender side, the world will be sure to find it, and to put the worst colour upon all you say or do, give an aggravation to every thing that may lessen you, and a spiteful turn to every thing that might recommend you.

Anger

Anger lays open those defects which friendship could not see, and civility might be willing to forget. Malice needs no such invitation to encourage it, neither are any pains more superfluous, than those we take to be ill spoken of. If envy, which never dies, and seldom sleeps, is content sometimes to be in a slumber, it is very unskilful to make a noise to awake it.

Besides, your wit will be misapplied, if it is wholly directed to disarm the faults of others, when it is so necessary to be often used, to mend and prevent your own. The sending our thoughts too much abroad, has the same effect, as when a family never stays at home. Neglect and disorder naturally follow (as they must do) within ourselves, if we do not frequently turn our eyes inwards, to see what is amiss with us: Where it is a sign we have an unwelcome prospect, when we do not take care to look upon it, but rather seek out consolations in the faults of those we converse with.

Let us avoid being the first in fixing a hard censure. Let it be confirmed by the general voice, before we give into it. Neither are you then to give sentence like a magistrate, or as if you had a special authority to bestow a good or ill name at your discretion. Do not dwell too long upon a weak side; touch and go away. Take pleasure to stay longer where you can commend; like bees, that fix only upon those herbs, out of which they may extract the juice their honey is composed of. A virtue stuck with bristles is too rough for this age; it must be adorned with some flowers, or else it will be unwillingly entertained. Thus, where it may be fit to strike it, must be done gently; and assure yourself, that where you care to do it, you will wound others more, and hurt yourself less by soft strokes, than by being harsh or violent.

The triumph of wit is to make your good-nature subdue your censure; to be quick in seeing faults, and slow in exposing them. You are to consider, that the invisible thing called a good name, is made up of the

breath of numbers that speak well of you. If by a disobliging word you silence the meanest, the gale will be less strong which is to bear up your esteem: and though nothing is so vain, as the eager pursuit of empty applause, yet to be well thought of, and to be kindly used by the world, is like a glory about a woman's head; it is a perfume she carries about with her, and leaves where-ever she goes; it is a charm against ill-will. Malice may empty her quiver, but cannot wound. The dirt will not stick; the jest will not take. Without the consent of the world a scandal does not go deep; it is only a slight stroke upon the injured party, and returns with the greater force upon those that gave it. I have read the character of Aricia, and was pleased with that part of it which related to scandal.

She never suffered any body, be they who they would, to be slandered in her presence: she had a thousand ways to turn off the conversation, when it rolled upon scandal. If the persons who gave the offence were below her, she always imposed silence upon them; if their quality demanded more respect, she shewed by her own silence, and by her looks, that she did not approve of it; always finding out reasons to justify those that were accused.

Persons of dignity and rank are apt to take great liberties with respect to their inferiors: however they ought to be on their guard, and not to mortify any one by shocking words. Their condition does not excuse their being unpolite. Their contempt of people creates a disgust, which is the hardest thing in the world to wear off. A passionate expression is often forgiven, but rallery in cold blood never; it being a sure sign of want of esteem.

Silence is an excellent remedy against slander. Complaints and reproaches sharpen instead of blunting it. People let a man alone, when they see he takes no notice of the disobliging things that are said to him: it is a great virtue, and costs little, to speak mildly to those

those that talk impertinently to you. We must live with the passionate and whimsical, as well as the good-natured and wise; we should pity their weakness and their whims; and to slight them, will be a more effectual way to mortify them, than to reprove.

Slander and censure use many arts to conceal their malignity: but whether they make use of direct and express terms, or of obscure and oblique; whether by way of downright reproach, or with some crafty preface of recommendation; if they have the effect to vilify, the manner of address does not alter the case. the one may be more dextrous, but is not one jot less faulty. For many times the deeper wounds are given by these smoother, and more artificial ways of slander, as by asking questions, "have you not heard so and so of such a man? I say no more, I only ask the question." Or by general intimations, "that they are loth to say what they have heard of such a one; are very sorry for it, and do not at all believe it," if you will believe them. This many times, without telling the thing, but leaving you in the dark to suspect the worst.

These and such like arts, though they may seem to be gentler and tenderer ways of using mens reputation, yet in truth, they are the most malicious and effectual methods of slander; because they insinuate something that is much worse than is said, and yet are very apt to create in unwary men, a strong belief of something that is very bad, though they know not what it is. It matters not in what fashion slander is dressed up, if it tends to defame a man, and diminish his reputation.

Censure, in some cases, is not only lawful, but very commendable. It is many times our duty to do it, in order to the probable amendment of the person that has committed the Offence. A man may, and ought to be told of his faults privately; or where it may not be fit for us to use that boldness and freedom, we may reveal his faults to one who is more fit and proper to reprove him, and will probably make no other use of

the uncharitable side ; which shews human nature to be strangely distorted from its original rectitude and innocence. The wit of man does more naturally vent itself in satire and censure, than in praise and panegyrick. When men set themselves to commend, it comes hardly from them, and not without great force or straining ; and if any thing be fitly said in that kind, it does hardly relish with most men : but in the way of invective, the invention of men is a plentiful and never-failing spring. This kind of wit is not more easy than it is acceptable ; it is greedily entertained, and greatly applauded : every man is glad to hear others abused, not considering how soon it may come to his own turn, to lie down and make sport for others.

Censure is almost become the general entertainment of all companies ; and the great and serious business of most meetings and visits, after the necessary ceremonies and compliments are over, is to sit down and backbite all the world. It is a common saying among certain people, whose birth and education should teach them better things, “ come let us rally all the world.” And it was a very sharp reproof given by a man of wit in a public assembly, “ that he was afraid to go out, lest he should be railed at.” It is the sauce of conversation, and all discourse is counted but flat and dull, which has not something of piquancy in it against somebody. For men generally love rather to hear evil of others than good, and are secretly pleased with ill reports, drinking them in with delight : Though at the same time they have so much justice, as to hate those that propagate them, and so much wit, as to conclude that those very persons will do the same for them in another place and company. Especially if it concerns one of another party, and that differs from us in matters of religion. In this case all parties seem to be agreed, that they do God great service in blating the reputation of their adversaries : and though they all pretend to be Christians, and the disciples of him who taught nothing but kindness

ness and meekness, and charity, yet it is strange to see with what a savage and murderous disposition they will fly at one another's reputation, and tear it in pieces. Whatever other scruples they may have, they make none to bespatter one another, in the most bitter and scandalous manner.

If they hear any good of their adversaries with what nicety and caution do they receive it? how many objections do they raise against it? and with what coldness do they at last admit it? "it is very well, say they, if it be true: I shall be glad to hear it confirmed; I never heard so much good of him before: You are a good man yourself, but have a care you be not deceived." It is well, if to balance the matter, and set things even, they do not clap some infirmity and fault in the other scale, that so the enemy may not go off with flying colours. On the other side, every man is a good and substantial author of all ill reports. I do not apply this to any one sort of men, tho' all are to blame this way. To speak impartially, the zealots of all parties have got a scurvy trick of lying for the truth.

This has appeared most visibly in latter times. There has a lying spirit gone out among us, and scandal and zeal have made terrible havock of our neighbour's reputation. "I have observed, says a reverend father of our church, the priests and bigots of the church of Rome, to be the ablest in this way, and to have the strongest faith for a lousy falshood and calumny: Others will bandy a false report, and toss it from one hand to another; but I never knew any that would so hug a lye, and be so very fond of it." Had that learned and pious prelate been a witness of the fondness of certain zealots of our own days for a lye; had he seen how they bandy it, how they hug it, would the papists have been the only party that would have deserved his reproof?

Another shrewd sign that ill-nature lies at the root of this vice is, that we easily forget the good which is said of others, and seldom make mention of it; but the

contrary sticks with us, lies uppermost in our
 ries, and is ready to come out upon all occasions
 what is yet more ill-natured and unjust, man
 when we do not believe it ourselves, we tell it
 with this charitable caution, "that we hope it is
 But in the mean time we give it our pass, and
 it to take its fortune, to be believed or not,
 to the charity of those into whose hands
 Those who cannot have a good opinion of th
 are very unwilling to have so of any one else.
 reason, they endeavour to bring men to a level
 it will be some justification of them, if they can
 der others as bad as themselves. It is a cruel
 which some men take, in worrying the reput
 others much better than themselves; and th
 divert the company. The injury of slander
 to a man's children, because the good or ill
 the father is derived down to them; and many
 best he has to leave them, is the reputation o
 blemished virtue and worth: and do we
 conscience, to rob his innocent children of
 part of this small patrimony, and of all the
 that would have been done them for their fath
 if his reputation had not been so undeservedly
 Is it no crime, by the breath of our mouth, a
 blast a man's reputation, and to ruin his
 Can we make a jest of so serious a matter? C
 jury so very hard to be repented of as it ought
 in such a case, no repentance will be accepta
 out restitution, if it be in our power; and
 will undo us in this world to make it; and if
 will be our ruin in the other.

Besides the injury of slander, it is common
 high provocation; and the consequence of th
 as bad as we can imagine, and may end in
 and desperate quarrels. This reason the wise
 each gives, why we should defame no man, "I
 be, says he, to a friend or foe, talk not of other m

CENSURE and REPROOF

and married, and daily, grow weary
what a large and tedious business
that constant praying, and
every other thing they must do
to keep their souls, and their
lives secure.

They hear any good of their neighbours
and choose so they receive it
as do they tell again to others
they at first admit? "I have
tried: I shall be glad to know
how much good of his heart
if, but have a care you be not weary
labor the matter, and in
me infirmity and faintness
my way has gone with
me, every man is a good man
ill reports. I do not know
if, that all we do is to
by, the results of all
lying for the truth
has appeared to me
ving spirit your
to reach the heart
"I have observed
the priests and hypocrites
that in this world
filthiness and
and tell it to
say that would be
Had that been
the fidelity of
I had he seen
would the people
have desired to
the same sign the
the same sign the
same, and tell it to

contrary sticks with us, lies uppermost in our memories, and is ready to come out upon all occasions. And what is yet more ill-natured and unjust, many times, when we do not believe it ourselves, we tell it to others with this charitable caution, "that we hope it is not true." But in the mean time we give it our pass, and venture it to take its fortune, to be believed or not, according to the charity of those into whose hands it comes. Those who cannot have a good opinion of themselves, are very unwilling to have so of any one else. For this reason, they endeavour to bring men to a level, hoping it will be some justification of them, if they can but render others as bad as themselves. It is a cruel pleasure which some men take, in worrying the reputation of others much better than themselves; and this only to divert the company. The injury of slander descends to a man's children, because the good or ill name of the father is derived down to them; and many times the best he has to leave them, is the reputation of his unblemished virtue and worth: and do we make no conscience, to rob his innocent children of the best part of this small patrimony, and of all the kindness that would have been done them for their father's sake, if his reputation had not been so undeservedly stained? Is it no crime, by the breath of our mouth, at once to blast a man's reputation, and to ruin his posterity? Can we make a jest of so serious a matter? Of an injury so very hard to be repented of as it ought? Because in such a case, no repentance will be acceptable without restitution, if it be in our power; and perhaps it will undo us in this world to make it; and if we do not, will be our ruin in the other.

Besides the injury of slander, it is commonly a very high provocation; and the consequence of that may be as bad as we can imagine, and may end in dangerous and desperate quarrels. This reason the wise son of Sirach gives, why we should defame no man, "whether it be, says he, to a friend or foe, talk not of other mens lives:

" for

"for he hath heard and observed thee:" that is, one way or other it will probably come to his knowledge, and "when the time cometh he will shew his hatred:" that is, he will take the first opportunity to revenge it.

At the best, it is always matter of grief to the person that is defamed; and Christianity, which is the best natured institution in the world, forbids us the doing those things, whereby we may grieve one another. A man's good name is a tender thing, and a wound there sinks deep into the spirit, even of a wise and good man. The more innocent any man is in this kind, the more sensible is he of this hard usage; because he never treats others so, nor is he conscious to himself that he has deserved it. The consequences of this vice are as bad, or worse to ourselves. Whoever is wont to speak evil of others, gives a bad character of himself, even to those whom he desires to please; who, if they be wise enough, will conclude, that he speaks of them to others, as he does of others to them. And were it not for that fond partiality which men have for themselves, no man could be so blind as not to see this. A reproachful and slanderous speech has cost many a man a duel, and in that the loss of his own life, or the murder of another, perhaps too the loss of his own soul. Though neither of those great mischiefs should happen, yet reproachful language may be inconvenient enough many other ways; and no quality does ordinarily recommend one more to the favour and good-will of men, than to be free from this vice. Every one desires such a man's friendship, and is apt to repose a great trust and confidence in him. When he is dead, men will praise him; and next to piety towards God, and righteousness to man, nothing is thought a more significant commendation, than that he was never, or very rarely, heard to speak ill of any. It was a singular character of a certain gentleman, "he knew not what it was to give any man an ill word."



I G N O R A N C E]

IT would be an endless task should we u
to give the instances of the great improve
women have made of education, there bein
any science in which some of them have not
It is very plain, therefore, that nature has given
good talents as men have, and if they are still c
weaker sex, it is because the other, which ass
name of the wiser, hinders them from improv
minds in useful knowledge, by accustoming
the study and practice of vanity and trifles.

How can they be instructed in any solid p
whose very instructors are froth and emptiness ?
women, were they rightly educated, and thei
from their childhood, well informed, they v
proof against all those batteries, see through a
those little silly artifices which are used to en
deceive them. A woman so instructed would v
self only on her virtue, and consequently be n
of what she esteems so much. She would know
what others say, but what herself does, must
up a good name, and be the only thing that
her ; the loudest encomium being not half so sa
as the calm and secret plaudit of her own min
moving on true principles of honour an
would not fail, on a review of itself, to antic
delightful eulogy she shall one day hear.

Whence is it but from ignorance, from wa
derstanding, how to compare and judge of

se a right end, to proportion the means to the end, to rate every thing according to its proper value, we quit the substance for the shadow, reality for appearance, and embrace those very things, which, if understood, we should hate and avoid, but now are incited to merely, because they usurp the name, though they have nothing of the nature, of those venerable objects we desire and seek: were it not for this delusion, is it probable a lady, who passionately desires to be admired, should ever consent to such actions as render her base and contemptible? Would she be so absurd as to think either to get love or keep it by those methods, which occasion loathing, and consequently in hatred? Would she reckon it a piece of her attire, or hope to gain esteem by such excesses as only lessen her in the eyes of all considerate and judicious persons? would she be so silly as to look big, and think herself the better person because she has more money to bestow profusely, or the good luck to have a better mantua-maker or milliner, than her neighbour? Would she, who by the regard she pays to wit, seems to make some pretences to it, undervalue her judgment so much as to admit the scurrility and profane noisy sense of men, whose foreheads are better than their eyes, to pass under that character? Would she be so weak as to imagine that a few airy fancies, joined with a great deal of impudence and ill-nature, the right definition of modern wit, can bespeak him a man of sense who runs counter to all the sense and reason that ever appeared in the world? Than which nothing can be an argument of greater shallowness, unless it be to regard and esteem him for it. Would a woman, who truly understood herself, be affected either with the praise or the calumnies of those worthless persons, whose lives are a direct contradiction to reason, a very proof of corruption, by whom one would blush to be amended, lest they should be mistaken for partners or connivers at their crime? Will she, who has a
jot

us, we would never lavish out the greatest part of our time and care on the decorations of a tenement which our lease is so very short, and which by our industry may lose its beauty before that lease expires, while we neglect a more glorious and durable habitation, we would never be so curious of the house which we are careless of the inhabitant, whose beauty is a constant great improvement, and will endure for ever without diminution or decay.

Thus ignorance, and a narrow education, the foundation of vice, and imitation and custom, set up: custom, that merciless torrent, carries us down with it, and indeed can be resisted by none but such as have a great deal of prudence, and a rooted virtue. It is but reasonable that she, who is not capable of finding out better rules, should follow those she sees her neighbours follow, lest she only change the instance, and retain the same folly. It would puzzle a considerable person to find fault with for all that sin and folly that is in the world, but custom certainly has nothing in itself to recommend it, and custom help to solve the difficulty. For virtue is out question, has on all accounts the preeminence over vice. It is abundantly more pleasant in the exercise, and as more advantageous in the consequences, as she who will but rightly use her reason in a reflection on herself and the nature of things, may

merely in compliance with an unreasonable fashion, and having inured ourselves to folly, we know not how to quit it. We go on in vice, not because we find that satisfaction in it which we hope for from it, but because we are unacquainted with the superior joys of virtue.

Add to this the hurry and noise of the world, which does generally so busy and pre-engage us, that we have little time, and less inclination, to stand still and reflect on our own minds. Those impertinent amusements which have seized us, keep their hold so well, and so constantly buz about our ears, that we cannot attend to the dictates of our reason, nor to the soft whispers, and winning persuasives of the divine spirit; by whose assistance, were we disposed to make use of it, we might shake off these follies, and regain our freedom. But alas! to complete our misfortunes, by a continual application to vanity and folly, we quite spoil the contexture and frame of our minds, so loosen and dissipate them, that nothing solid and substantial will stay in them. By an habitual inadvertency we render ourselves incapable of any serious and improving thought, till our minds themselves become as light and frothy, as those things they are conversant about. To all which, if we farther add the great industry that bad people use to corrupt the good, and that unaccountable backwardness which appears in too many good persons, to stand up for and propagate the piety they profess; so strangely are things transposed, that virtue puts on the blushes which belong to vice, and vice insults with the authority of virtue; we shall have a pretty fair account of the causes of our non-improvement.

When a poor young lady is taught to value herself on nothing but her clothes, and to think she's very fine when well accoutred; when she hears it said, that it is wisdom enough for her to know how to dress herself, that she may become amiable in his eyes, to whom it appertains to be knowing and learned; who can blame her if she spends her time and money upon such accomplishments,

complishments, and sometimes extends it farther than her misinformers desire she should? When she sees the vain and the gay making parade in the world, and attended with the courtship and admiration of the gazing herd, no wonder that her tender eyes are dazzled with the pageantry, and, wanting judgment to pass a due estimate on them and their admirers, she longs to be such a fine and celebrated thing as they? What though she be sometimes told of another world, she has however a more lively perception of this, and may well think, that if her instructors were in earnest when they tell her of hereafter, they would not be so busied and concerned about what happens here. She is, it may be, taught the principles and duties of religion, but not acquainted with the reasons and grounds of them, being told it is enough for her to believe; to examine why and wherefore belongs not to her. And thus, though her piety may be tall and spreading, yet because it wants foundation and root, the first rude temptation overthrows and blasts it, or perhaps the short-lived ground decays and withers of its own accord. But why should she be blamed for setting no great value upon her soul, whose noblest faculty, her understanding, is rendered useless to her? Or censured for relinquishing a course of life, whose prerogatives she was never acquainted with; and though highly reasonable in itself, was put upon the embracing it with as little reason as she now forsakes it? For if her religion itself be taken up as the mode of the country, it is no strange thing that she lays it down again in conformity to the fashion. Whereas she whose reason is suffered to display itself, to enquire into the grounds and motives of religion, to make a disquisition of its graces, and search out its hidden branches; who is a Christian out of choice, not in conformity to those among whom she lives: and cleaves to piety because it is her wisdom, her interest, her joy, not because she has been accustomed to it; she who is not only eminently and unmoveably good, but able to give

a reason why she is so, is too firm and staple to be ed by the pitiful allurements of sin, too wise and well bottomed to be undermined and supplanted by strongest efforts of temptation. Doubtless, a truly istian life requires a clear understanding, as well regular affections, that both together may move will to a direct choice of good, and a stedfast ad- nce to it. For though the heart may be honest, it ut by chance that the will is right, if the under- ding be ignorant and cloudy. And what is the reason we sometimes see persons unhappily falling off from r piety, but because it was their affections, not their gment, that inclined them to be religious? Reason truth are firm and immutable: she who bottoms hem is on sure ground. Humour and inclination sandy foundations, and she who is swayed by her tions, more than by her judgment, owes the hap- ss of her soul, in a great measure, to the temper of body. Her piety may perhaps blaze high, but not last long; for the affections are various and geable, moved by every object, and the last comer y undoes whatever his predecessor has done before. a persons are always in extremes, they are either ently good, or quite cold and indifferent; a perpe- trouble to themselves and others, by indecent rap- s, or unnecessary scruples: there is no beauty and r in their lives, all is rapid and unaccountable; are now very furious in such a course, but they ot tell why, and anon as violent in the other ex- ie. Having more heat than light, their zeal out- s their knowledge; and instead of representing piety t is in itself, the most lovely and inviting thing una- ble, they expose it to the contempt and ridicule of censorious world. Their devotion becomes rick- starved and contracted in some of its vital parts, disproportioned and overgrown in lets material in- ces: whilst one duty is overdone to commute for neglect of another, and the mistaken person thinks the

the being often on her knees, attunes for all the mis-carriages of her conversation: not considering that it is in vain to petition for those graces which we take no care to practise, and a mockery to adore those perfections we run counter to; that the true end of all our prayers and external devotion, is to work our minds to a true Christian temper, to obtain for us the empire of our passions, and to reduce all irregular inclinations; that so we may be as like God in purity and all his imitable excellencies, as is consistent with the imperfection of a creature.

Having discoursed of the advantages of good understanding towards the regular conduct of life: let us now consider how it may be improved. If perfection consists in the clearness and largeness of its view; it improves proportionably as its ideas become clear and more extensive: but this is not so to be understood, as if all sorts of notices contributed to our improvement: there are some things which makes us no wiser when we know them, others which it is best to be ignorant of. But that understanding seems to be most exalted, which has the clearest and most extensive view of such truths as are suitable to its capacity, and necessary and convenient to be known in this present state; for being as we are, but creatures, our understanding, in its greatest perfection, has only a limited excellency. It has, indeed, a vast extent, and it were not amiss if we tarried a little in the contemplation of its powers and capacities, provided that the prospect did not make us giddy, that we remember from whom we have received them, and balance those lofty thoughts, which a view of our intellectuals may occasion, with the depressing ones which the irregularity of our morals will suggest; that we learn from this inspection how indecorous it is to busy this bright side of us in mean things, seeing it is capable of such noble ones.

Human nature is a wonderful composure, admirable in its outward structure, but much more excellent
in

beauties of its inward; and she, who considers the image her soul was created, and whose blood is to redeem it, cannot prize it too much, nor pay it her utmost regard. There is nothing in the material world to be compared to it. All the things we dote on, and for which we many times expose our souls to ruin, are of no consideration in the sight of it: they are not the good of the soul: its happiness depends not on them, but they often deceive and withdraw it from its true good. It was made for the contemplation and enjoyment of its God, and all things are capable of this, though in a different degree, in measures somewhat different.

Truth in general is the object of the understanding. Truths are not equally evident, because of the weakness of the human mind; which though it can grasp like in many truths, yet cannot, any more than the eye can attend to many things at once. There are particular truths of which God has not thought proper to communicate such ideas to us, as are necessary to the comprehension of them: for knowing nothing without the idea we have of it, and judging only according to the relation we find between two or more things, we cannot discover the truth we search for, its intention, or the immediate consequence of it, it is necessary that we should have a great number of ideas to compare them, but if this number were too great, though we have sufficient evidence of each one, we could not compare, because we have no clear and distinct conception of them; nor we are ignorant of the way which would arise from the comparison of them, we want a third by which to compare them. We have an instance of this in a person who has a great number of ideas, and of some very much more than others, but he cannot compare them, because we take too much notice of the ideas themselves, and not the objects of them. We are too much engaged with the ideas, and not with the things which they represent.

ment of reason, has told us, that the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God; and our idea of the Godhead of any one of these persons, is as clear as our idea of any of the other: both reason and revelation assure us, that God is one simple essence undivided, and infinite in all perfection; this is the natural idea which we have of God: how then can the Father be God, the Son God, and the Holy Ghost God, when yet there is but one God? That these two propositions are true, we are certain, both because God, who cannot lie has revealed them, and because we have as clear an idea of them, as it is possible for a finite mind should have of an infinite nature. But we cannot find out how this should be by the bare comparison of these two ideas, without the help of a metaphor by which to compare them: this God has not thought fit to impart to us; the prospect it would have presented to us would have been too dazzling, too bright for our feeble faculties to bear, and we ought to acquiesce in the divine will. So then we are all assured, that these two propositions are true; "there is but one God, and there are three persons in the Godhead;" but we know not the manner how these things are: nor can our acquiescence in this thought unreasonable, nor the doctrine we subscribe be run down as absurd and contradictory by every warm disputer and pretender to reason, whose business it is perhaps, a continual contradiction to it, and he has but a little of it besides the name. For we ought not to think it strange that God has folded up his own nature, not in darkness, but in an adorable, inaccessible light, since his wisdom sees it fit to keep us ignorant of our own. We know and feel the union between our soul and body, but who amongst us sees so far as to find out with certitude and exactness, the ties which unite two such different substances, and how they are able to act upon each other? We are conscious of our own liberty; whoever denies it, denies that we are capable of rewards and punishments, degrades

ure, and makes himself but a more curious piece of chianism; and none but atheists will call in question providence of God. or deny that he governs all, n the most free of all his creatures. But who can oncile me these? Or adjust the limits between God's science, and man's free-will? Our understandings

sufficiently illuminated to lead us to the fountain life and light. We do, or may know enough to our souls with the noblest conceptions, the humblest ration, and the entirest love of the Author of our ng, and what can we desire farther? If we make so a use of that knowledge which we have, as to be t up with it, how dangerous would it be for us to e more knowledge in a state in which we have so le humility? But if vain man will pretend to wif- n, let him first learn to know the length of his own

. Though the human intellect has a large extent, being limited, as we have already said; this limi- on is the cause of those different modes of thinking, ich, for distinction sake, we call faith, science, l opinion: for in this present and imperfect state which we know not any thing by intuition, or un- diate view, except a few first principles, which we l self-evident, the most of our knowledge is acquired reasoning and deduction: and these three modes understanding, faith, science, and opinion, are otherwise distinguished than by the different degrees :learness and evidence, in the premises from which conclusion is drawn.

Knowledge, in a proper and restricted sense, and as propriated to science, signifies that clear perception ich is followed by a firm assent to conclusions rightly own from premises of which we have clear and distinct as: which premises or principles must be so clear l evident, that supposing us reasonable creatures, and e from prejudices and passions, which, for the time y predominate, as good as deprive us of our reason,

we cannot withhold our assent from them without manifest violence to our reason.

But if the nature of the thing be such, as that it admits of no undoubted premises to argue from, or, at least, we do not at present know of any, or that the conclusion does not so necessarily follow, as to give a perfect satisfaction to the mind, and to free it from all hesitation, that which we think of it is then called opinion.

Again, if the medium we make use of to prove the proposition be authority, the conclusion which we draw from it, is said to be believed: this is what we call faith, and when the authority is God's, a divine faith.

Moral certainty is a species of knowledge, whose proofs are of a compounded nature, in part resembling those which belong to science, and partly those of faith. We do not make the whole process ourselves, but depend on another for the immediate proof; but we ourselves deduce the mediate from circumstances and principles as certain, and almost as evident as those of science, and which lead us to the immediate proofs and make it unreasonable to doubt of them. Indeed we do not seldom deceive ourselves in this matter, by inclining alternately to both extremes. Sometimes we reject truths which are morally certain, as conjectural and probable only, because they have not a physical and mathematical certainty, which they are incapable of: at another time we embrace the slightest conjectures, and any thing which looks with probability, as moral certainties and real virtues, if fancy, passion, or interest recommend them. So ready are we to be determined by these, rather than by solid reason.

In this enumeration of the several ways of knowing, the senses are not reckoned, in regard that we are more properly said to be conscious of, than to know such things as we perceive by sensation: and also because that light which we suppose to be let into our ideas by our senses, is indeed very dim and fallacious, and not

to be relied on until it has past the test of reason ; neither is there any mode of knowledge which may not be reduced to those already mentioned. Now, though there is a great difference between opinion and science, true science being immutable, but opinion variable and uncertain ; yet there is not such a difference between faith and science as is usually supposed ; the difference consists not in the certainty, but in the way of proof ; the objects of faith are as rationally and as firmly proved as the objects of science, though by another way : as science demonstrates things that are seen, so faith is the evidence of such as are not seen : and he who rejects the evidence of faith in such things as belong to its cognisance, is as unreasonable as he who denies propositions in geometry that are proved with mathematical exactness.

There is nothing true which is not in itself demonstrable, or which we should not pronounce to be true, had we a clear and intuitive view of it. But, as was said above, we see very few things by intuition, neither are we furnished with mediums to make the process ourselves in demonstrating truths, and therefore there are some truths, which we must either be totally ignorant of, or else receive them on the testimony of another person, to whose understanding they are clear and manifest, though not to ours. And if this person be one, who can neither be deceived nor deceive, we are as certain of those conclusions which we prove by his authority, as we are of those we demonstrate by our own reason ; nay more certain by how much his reason is more comprehensive and infallible than our own.

Science is the following the process ourselves upon clear and evident principles. Faith is a dependence on the credit of another, in such matters as are out of view. And when we have very good reason to submit to the testimony of the person we believe, faith is as firm, and those truths it discovers to us as truly
intel-

intelligible, and as strongly proved in their kind, as science.

In a word, as every sense, so every capacity of the understanding, has its proper objects. The objects of science are things within our view, of which we may have clear and distinct ideas, and nothing should be determined here without clearness and evidence. To be able to repeat any person's dogma, without forming a distinct idea of it ourselves, is not to know, but to remember; and to have a confused indeterminate idea, is to conjecture, not to understand.

The objects of faith are as certain, and as truly intelligible in themselves, as those of science, as has been said already; only we become persuaded of the truth of them by another method: we do not see them so clearly and distinctly as to be unable to disbelieve them. Faith has a mixture of the will, that it may be rewardable; for who will thank us for giving our assent where it was impossible to withhold it? Faith then may be said to be a sort of knowledge capable of reward, and men are infidels not for want of conviction, but through an unwillingness to believe.

As it is a fault to believe in matters of science, where we may expect demonstration and evidence, so it is a reproach to our understanding, and a proof of our dissingenuity, to require that sort of process peculiar to science, for the confirmation of such truths as are not the proper objects of it: it is as ridiculous as to reject music because we cannot taste or smell it, or to deny there is such a thing as beauty because we do not hear it. He who would see with his ears, and hear with his eyes, may indeed set up in Bedlam for a man of extraordinary reach, a sagacious person who will not be imposed upon, one who must have more authentic proofs than his dull forefathers were content with. But men of dry reason and a moderate genius, I suppose, will think nature has done very well in allotting to each sense its proper employment; and such as these will as
readily

readily acknowledged, that it is as honourable for the soul to believe what is truly the object of faith, as it is for her to know what is really the object of her knowledge. And were we not strangely perverse, we should not scruple divine authority, when we daily submit to human. Whoever has not seen Paris, has nothing but human authority to assure him there is such a place, and yet he would be laughed at as ridiculous who should call it in question; though he may, as well in this as in another case, pretend that his informers have designs to serve, intend to impose on him, and mock his credulity. Nay how many of us daily make that a matter of faith, which indeed belongs to science, by adhering blindly to the dictates of some famous philosopher in physical truths, the principles of which we have as much right to examine, and to make deductions from them, as he had?

In a word, we may know enough for all the purposes of life, enough to busy this active faculty of thinking, to employ and entertain the spare intervals of time, and to keep us from rust and idleness, but we must not pretend to fathom all depths with our own short line; we should be wise unto sobriety, and reckon we know very little, if we go about to make our own reason the standard of all truth. It is very certain that nothing is true but what is conformable to reason; that is to the divine reason, of which ours is but a short faint ray; and it is as certain, that there are many truths which human reason cannot comprehend. Therefore to be thoroughly sensible of the capacity of the mind, to discern precisely its bounds and limits, and to direct our studies and inquiries accordingly; to know what is to be known, and to believe what is to be believed, is the property of a wise person. To be content with too little knowledge, or to aspire to overmuch, is equally a fault; to make that use of our understandings which God has fitted and designed them for, is the medium which we ought to take. For the difference between a

plowman and a doctor does not seem to consist in this, that the business of the one is to search after knowledge, and the other has nothing to do with it. No: whoever has a rational soul, ought surely to employ it about some truth or other, to procure for it right ideas, that its judgments may be true, though its knowledge be not very extensive. But herein lies the difference, that though truth is the object of every individual understanding, yet all are not equally enlarged, nor able to comprehend so much; and they, whose capacities and circumstances of living do not fit them for it, lie not under that obligation of extending their view, which persons of a larger reach and greater leisure do. There is indeed frequently a mistake in this matter. People who are not fit, will be puzzling their heads to little purpose; and those who are, prove slothful, and decline the trouble. Thus will it be if we do not thoroughly understand ourselves, but suffer pride or ease to make the estimate.

Having considered the capacity of the understanding in general, we must descend to the view of our own particular, observing the bent and turn of our own minds, which way our genius lies, and to what it is most inclined. I see no reason why there may not be as great a variety in minds, as there is in faces; that the soul as well as the body may not have something in it to distinguish it, not only from all other intelligent natures, but even from those of its own kind. There are different proportions in faces, which recommend them to some eyes sooner than to others; and though all truth is amiable to a reasonable mind, and proper to employ it, yet why may there not be some particular truths more agreeable to each individual understanding than others are? Variety gives beauty to the material world, and why not to the intellectual? We can discern the different abilities which the wise Author of all things has endowed us with; the different circumstances in which he has placed us, in reference to this world, and
the

the concerns of an animal life, that some may be continually useful; and that since each single person is too limited and confined to attend to many, much less to all things, we may receive from each other a reciprocal advantage; and why may we not think he has done the same with respect to truth? That since it is too much for one, our united strength should be employed in the search of her. Especially since the divine Being, who contains in himself all reality and truth, is infinite in perfection, and therefore should be infinitely adored and loved. And if creatures are by their being so incapable of rendering to their incomprehensible Creator an adoration and love that is worthy of him, it is but decorous that they should however do as much as they can. All that variety of sublime truths, of beautiful and wondrous objects which surround us, are nothing else but a various display of his unbounded excellencies, and why should any of them pass unobserved? Why should not every individual understanding be in a more especial manner fitted for, and employed in the disquisition of some particular truth and beauty? It is true, after our researches, we can no more sufficiently know God, than we can worthily love him; and are as much unable to find out all his works, as we are his nature. Yet this should only prompt us to exert all our powers, and to do our best, since even that were too little, could we possibly do more. We can never offer to him so much praise as he deserves; and therefore it is but fit he should have all that mankind can possibly render him. He is indeed immutable in his own nature, but those discoveries we daily make of his operations, will always afford us somewhat new and surprising; for this all-glorious sun, the author of life and light, is as inexhaustible a source of truth, as he is of joy and happiness.

If then we are convinced that there is some peculiar task allotted us, our next business will be to inquire what it is. To know our own strength, and neither to

over nor under-rate ourselves, is one of the most material points of wisdom, and which indeed we are most commonly ignorant of, else we should not reach at all, how unable soever we are to attain it, nor make so many successful attempts, and be forced to come off with that pitiful apology, "I was mistaken, I did not think it." But we can scarce duly estimate our understandings, until we have regulated our wills, reformed self-love, and a train of unmortified passions, which engage us in a frequent error and aptness to lessen the human mind, to detract from its grandeur, and abridge its powers, when we consider it in general, and as great a forwardness when we look on ourselves, to extend our abilities beyond their bounds. Are we conscious of a defect? The shallowness of human reason at large must bear the blame. We harangue very excellently on the ignorance and vanity of mankind, and it were well if we rested here, and would forbear to murmur even at our Creator himself for allowing us so scanty a portion. But if reason has shone out, dispelling those clouds which eclipsed the bright face of truth, we arrogate all to ourselves. My discovery, my hypothesis, the strength and clearness of my reasonings, rather than the truth, are what we would expose to view; it is that we idolize ourselves, and would have every one admire and celebrate. And yet all this is no more, perhaps, than another has done before us, or at least might have done with our opportunities and advantages. The reverse of this procedure would become us better; and it were more glorious, as well as more just, to ascribe the excellencies of the mind to human nature in the lump, and to take the weaknesses to ourselves. By this we should both avoid sloth, the best use we can make of our ignorance and infirmity being first to be humbled for, and then seriously to endeavour their amendment, and also secure our industry from the mixtures of pride and envy; by looking on our own acquisitions as a general treasure, in which the whole have a right,

we

we should pretend to no more than a share; and considering ourselves as parts of the same whole, we should expect to find our own account in the improvement of every part of it; which would restrain us from being puffed up with the contemplation of our own, and from repining at our neighbours excellencies. For let reason shine forth where it may, as we cannot engross, so neither can we be excluded from sharing in the benefit unless we wilfully exclude ourselves; every one being the better for true worth and good sense, except the little souls that envy them.

To help us to the knowledge of our own capacities, the informations of our friends, nay even of our enemies, may be useful. The former, if wise and true, will direct us to the same course to which our genius points, and the latter will indultiously endeavour to divert us from it. We cannot be too careful, that those do not disguise themselves under the specious appearance of the former, to do us an ill turn the more effectually. For it is not seldom seen, that such as pretend great concern for us, will press on us such studies, or ways of living, as inwardly they know we are unfit for, to gratify thereby their secret envy, diverting us from that to which our own genius disposes us, and in which therefore they have reason to suppose we would be excellent. But tho' we may make use of the opinions of both, yet if we will be sincere and ingenuous, we cannot have a more faithful director than our own heart. He who gave us these dispositions, will excite us to the use and improvement of them, and, unless we drive him from us by our impurity, or through negligence and want of attention, let slip his secret whispers, this master within us will lay most in our view such lessons as he would have us take. Our care then must be, to open our eyes to that beam of light, which does in a more especial manner break in upon us; to fix steadily, and to examine accurately, those notions which are most lively represented to us, and to lay out our thoughts and

time in the cultivation of them. It may be our humour will not be gratified, nor our interest served by such a method. Other business or amusements put on a finer garb; and come attended with more charms and grandeur; these recommend us to the world, make us beloved and illustrious in it: whilst the followers of truth are despised and looked askew on, as fantastical speculatists, unfociable thinkers, who pretend to see farther than their neighbours, to rectify what custom has established; and are so unmannerly, as to think and talk out of the common way. He who speaks truth makes a satire upon the greatest part of mankind, and they are not over-apt to forgive him. Their gall is touched proportionably as their wounds are more deeply searched into, though it be only in order to a cure. They therefore who love truth, should be hated by the most; who, though they openly pretend to honour, yet secretly malign her, because she reproaches them. And as a plausible life is not often a very religious one, which made the best judge pronounce a woe on those of whom all men should speak well, so neither is the most just and illuminated understanding, the most admired and trusted to; but a plausible speaker, as well as a plausible liver, commonly has the applause of the world. If then we consult our passions and vanity, we shall go near to determine amiss, and make that use of our intellectuals, which fancy or interest pushes us on to, not which nature has fitted us for. Hence it is, that those who might have done very well in some studies and employments, make but bungling work when they apply themselves to others. We go on apace, when the wind and tide are on our side, but it costs us much labour, and we make little speed, when we row against both.

As a due consideration of our particular capacity would put us right in our studies, so would it keep us from clashing with our neighbours, whom we often contend with,

with, not so much out of love to truth, as through a humour of contradiction, or because we think it the best way to shew our parts, and by this trial of skill to exalt ourselves above them. If, instead of disputing and laughing with them, of bending all the force of our wit, to contradict and oppose those advances which they make, we would well understand, duly employ, and kindly communicate our peculiar talent, how much more service might we do our Lord? how much more useful might we be to one another? we should be restrained from aspiring to things above our reach, and not abuse those good parts which were given us for common benefit, to the destruction of ourselves and others.

Because they who need amendment most, are commonly least disposed to make such reflections as are necessary to procure it, we will consider a little for them, and observe the most usual defects of the thinking faculty.

If we are of their opinion who say, the understanding is only passive, and that judgment belongs to the will, I see not any defect the former can have, besides narrowness, and a disability to extend itself to many things, which is indeed incident to all creatures; the brightest intelligence in the highest order of angels is then defective, as well as the meanest mortal, though in a less degree. Nor ought it to be complained of, since it is natural and necessary; we may as well desire to be Gods, as desire to know all things. Some sort of ignorance, therefore, or non-perception, we cannot help. A finite mind, suppose it as large as you please, can never extend itself to infinite truths.

But no doubt it is in our power, to remedy a great deal more than we do, and probably a larger range is allowed us, than the most active and lively understanding has hitherto reached. Ignorance then cannot be avoided, but error may; we cannot judge of things of which we have no idea, but we can suspend our judgment about those of which we have, though clearness and

evidence oblige us to pass it. Indeed, in strictness of speech, the will, and not the understanding, is blameable when we think amiss, since the latter opposes not the ends for which God made it, but readily extends itself as far as it can, receiving such impressions as are made on it. It is the former which directs it to such objects, that fills up its capacity with such ideas, as are foreign to its business, and of no use to it, or which does not at least oppose the incursions of material things, and deface, as much as it is able, those impressions which sensible objects leave in the imagination.

They who apply themselves to the contemplation of truth, will perhaps at first find a contraction, or emptiness of thought, and that their mind offers nothing on the subject they would consider, is not ready at unfolding, nor in representing correspondent ideas to be compared with it, is, as it were, asleep, or in a dream, and though not empty of all thought, yet thinks nothing clearly or to the purpose. The primary cause of this, is that limitation which all created minds are subject to, which limitation appears more visible in some than in others, either because some minds are endowed by their Creator with a larger capacity than the rest; or if you are not inclined to think so, then by reason of the bodily indisposition of the organs, which cramps and contracts the operations of the mind. That person whose capacity of receiving ideas is very little; whose ideas are disordered, and not capable of being so disposed as that they may be compared, in order to the forming of a judgment, is a fool, or little better. If we find this to be our case, and that after frequent trials there appears no hopes of amendment, it is best to desist, we shall but lose our labour, we may do some good in an active life, and employments that depend on the body, but we are altogether unfit for contemplation, and the exercises of the mind. Yet before we give out, let us see whether it be thus with us in all cases: Can we think and argue rationally about a dress, an intrigue,
an

estate? Why then not upon better subjects? The way of considering and meditating justly, is the same all occasions. It is true, there will fewest ideas rise, when we would meditate on such subjects as we have not least conversant with; but this is a fault which it is in our power to remedy, first by reading or discoursing, and then by frequent and serious meditation.

As those we have been speaking of are hindered in their search after truth, through a want of ideas, so there is another sort, who are not happy in their enquiries, on account of the multitude and impetuosity of their ideas, and latileness of thought, very pernicious to true science, a fault, which people of warm imaginations and lively spirits are apt to fall into. Such a temper is readily disposed to receive errors, and very well qualified to propagate them, especially if a volubility of speech be joined to it. These, through an immoderate facility of thinking, skip from one idea to another, without observing due order and connexion. They content themselves with a superficial view, a random search, and depending on the vigour of their imagination, are taken with appearance, never tarrying to penetrate the subject, or to find out truth, if she floats upon the surface. A multitude of ideas, not related to the matter they design to think of, rush in upon the mind, and their easy mind entertains all comers, how pertinent soever: instead of examining the question in debate, they are got into the clouds, numbering the stars in the moon, and building airy castles there. Not easy to cure this defect, since it deceives others, as well as those that have it, with a shew of ingenuity. The vivacity of such persons makes their conversation agreeable with those that consider not much, though not with the judicious. It procures for them the character of a wit, but hinders them from being wise: For truth is not often found by such as will not take time to examine her counterfeits, to distinguish between evidence and probability, realities and appearances, but who

through a conceit of their own sharp-sightedness, think they can pierce to the bottom with the first glance.

To cure this distemper perfectly, it will be necessary to apply to the body, as well as to the mind. The animal spirits must be lessened, or rendered more calm and manageable, at least they must not be unnaturally and violently moved by such a diet, or such passions, designs, and divertisements, as are likely to put them in a ferment. Contemplation requires a governable body, a sedate and steady mind; and the body and the mind do reciprocally influence each other, that we can scarce keep the one in tune if the other be out. We can neither observe the errors of our intellect, nor the irregularity of our morals, while we are darkened by fumes, agitated with unruly passions, or carried away with eager desires after sensible things and vanities. We must, therefore, withdraw our minds from the world, from adhering to the senses, from the love of material beings, of pomps and gaieties; for it is these that usually steal away the heart, that seduce the mind to such unaccountable wanderings, and to fill up its capacity, that they leave no room for truth, so distract its attention, that it cannot enquire after her. For though the body does partly occasion this fault, yet the will, no doubt, may in good measure remedy it, by using its authority to fix the understanding on such objects as it would have contemplated; it has a rein which will certainly curb this wandering, if it can but be persuaded to make use of it. Indeed attention and deep meditation are not so agreeable to our animal nature, do not flatter our pride so well as this agreeable reverie, which gives us a pretence to knowledge, without taking much pains to acquire it, and does not choke us with the humbling thoughts of our own ignorance, with which we must make such ado, before it can be enlightened: yet without attention and strict examination, we are liable to false judgments on every occasion, to vanity and arrogance, to impertinent prating of things we do not understand; are
kept

kept from making a progress, because we fancy ourselves^s to be at the top already, and can never attain to true wisdom. If for the future then we would think to purpose, we must suffer ourselves to be convinced, how oft we have already thought to none, suspect our quickness, and not give our desultory imagination leave to ramble.

That we may the better restrain it, let us consider, what a loss of time and study such irregular and useless thoughts occasion, what a reproach they are to our reason, how they cheat us with a shew of knowledge, which so long as we are under the power of this giddy temper, will inevitably escape us. And if to this we add a serious perusal of such books as are not loosely writ, but require an attentive and awakened mind to apprehend and to take in the whole force of them, obliging ourselves to understand them thoroughly, so as to be able to give a just account of them to ourselves, or rather to some other person, intelligent enough to take it, and correct our mistakes; it is to be hoped we shall obtain a due poise of mind, and be able to direct our thoughts to the thorough discussion of such objects as we would examine. Such books, I mean, as are fuller of matter than words, which diffuse a light through every part of the subject treated of, do not skim, but penetrate to the bottom; yet so as to leave somewhat to be wrought out by the reader's own meditation; such as are writ with order and connexion, the strength of whose arguments cannot be sufficiently felt, unless we remember and compare the whole system.

Volatileness of thought occasions rashness and precipitation in our judgments, and too great a conceit of ourselves: all the irregularities of our will proceed from these false judgments, through want of consideration, or a partial examination when we do consider. For did we consider with any manner of attention, we could not be so absurd as to call evil good, and choose it as such, or prefer a less good before a greater, a poor momentary trifle, before the purity and perfection of our mind.

mind. We seek no farther than the first appearance of truth and good: here we stop, allowing neither time nor thought to search to the bottom, and to pull off those disguises which impose on us. This precipitation is what gives birth to all our errors, which are nothing else but a hasty and injudicious sentence, a mistaking one thing for another, supposing an agreement or disparity among ideas and their relations, where in reality there is none, occasioned by an imperfect and cursory view of them. And though there are other things which may be said to lead us into error, yet they do it only as they lead us into rash and precipitate judgments. We love grandeur, and every thing that feeds our good opinion of ourselves, and therefore would judge off-hand, because we suppose it a disparagement to our understandings, to be long in examining; so that we greedily embrace whatever seems to carry evidence enough for a speedy determination, how slight and superficial soever it be; whereas did we calmly and deliberately examine our evidence, and how far those motives we are acted by ought to influence, we should not be liable to this seduction: For by this means the impetuosity of a warm imagination would be cooled, and the extravagancies of a disorderly one regulated. We should not be deceived by the report of our senses, the prejudices of education, our own private interest and readiness to receive the opinions, whether true or false, of those we love, or would appear to love, because we think they will serve us in that interest. Our inordinate thirst after a great reputation, or the power and riches, the grandeurs and pleasures of this world, would no longer dissipate our thoughts and distract our attention, for we should be then sensible how little concern is due to them.

Whatever false principle we embrace, whatever wrong conclusion we draw from true ones, is a disparagement to our thinking power, a weakness of judgment proceeding from a confused and imperfect view
of

of things, as that does for want of attention, and a hasty and impartial examination. It were endless to reckon up all the false maxims and reasonings we fall into; the general causes have been already mentioned, the particulars are as many as those several compositions which arise from the various mixtures of the passions, interests, education, conversation and reading, &c. of particular persons. The best way I can think of to improve the understanding, and to guard it against all error, whatever cause they proceed from, is to regulate the will, whose office it is to determine the understanding, to such and such ideas, and to stay it in the consideration of them so long, as is necessary to the discovery of truth; for if the will be right, the understanding cannot be guilty of any palpable errors. We should not judge of any thing which we do not apprehend; we should suspend our assent, till we see just cause to give it, and determine nothing, till the strength and clearness of the evidence oblige us to it. We should withdraw ourselves, as much as may be, from corporeal things, that pure reason may be heard the better. We should make that use of our senses, for which we were designed and fitted, the preservation of the body, but not depend on their testimony in our enquiries after truth. We should particularly divest ourselves of mistaken self-love, little ends, and mean designs, and keep our inclinations and passions under government. We should not engage ourselves so far in any party or opinion, as to make it in a manner necessary that that should be right, lest from wishing, we come at last to persuade ourselves it is so. We should be passionately in love with truth, as being thoroughly sensible of her excellency and beauty. We should embrace her, how opposite soever she may sometimes be to our humours and designs, we should labour to bring these over to her, and never attempt to make her truckle to them. We should be so far from disliking a truth because it touches us home, and lays open our tenderest

I

dearest and dearest corruption, that we should rather prize it the more, by how much the more plainly it shews us our errors and miscarriages. These are the truths it concerns us most to know: It is not material to us what other peoples opinions are, any farther than as the knowledge of their sentiments may correct our mistakes: And the higher our station is in the world, so much the greater need have we to be curious in this particular.

The mean and inconsiderable often stumble on truth, when they seek not after her; but she is commonly kept out of the way, and industriously concealed from the great and mighty, either out of design or envy; for whoever would make a property of another, must by all means conceal the truth from him, and they who envy their neighbour's pre-eminence in other things, are willing themselves to excel in exactness of judgment, which they think, and very truly, to be the greatest excellency. To help forward this deception, the great, instead of being industrious in finding out the truth, are generally very impatient when they meet with her. She does not treat them so tenderly and familiarly as their flatterers do. There is in her that which used to be the character of our nation, an honest plainness and sincerity, openness and blunt familiarity. She cannot mold herself into all shapes to be rendered agreeable, but, standing on her native worth, is regardless of outside and varnish.

As to the method of thinking, we shall not send you farther than your own minds to learn it. You may, if you please, take in the assistance of some well-chosen book, but a good natural reason, after all, is the best director: without this, you will scarce argue well, tho' you had the choicest books and tutors to instruct you; but with it you may, though you happen to be destitute of the other: For, as the judicious author of the art of thinking well observes, "Those operations of the mind proceed merely from nature, and that some-
times

times more perfectly from those who are altogether ignorant of logick, than from those who have learned it."

That which we propose in all our meditations and reasonings, is either to deduce some truth we are in search of, from such principles as we are already acquainted with, or else to dispose our thoughts and reasonings in such a manner, as to be able to convince others of those truths which we ourselves are convinced of. Other designs, indeed, men may have, such as the maintenance of their own opinions, actions, and parties, without regard either to the truth and justice of them, or to the great hurt they may do by imposing on their simple and unwary neighbours; but these are mean and base ones, beneath a man, much more a Christian, who is, or ought to be, endowed with greater integrity and ingenuity.

Now reasoning being nothing else but a comparison of ideas, and a deducing of conclusions from clear and evident principles, it is in the first place requisite, that our ideas be clear and just, and our principles true, else all our discourse will be nonsense and absurdity, falsehood and error. That our ideas may be right, we have no more to do but to look into our own minds, having, as was said above, laid aside all prejudices, and whatever may give a false tincture to our light; there we shall find a clear and lively representation of what we seek for, unsophisticated with the dross of false definitions and unintelligible expressions. But we must not imagine that a transient view will serve the turn, or that our eye will be enlightened if it be not fixed: For though truth be exceeding bright, yet since our prejudices and passions have darkened our eye-sight, it requires no little pains and application of mind to find her out; the neglect of which application is the reason that we have so little truth, and that the little we have is almost lost in that rubbish of error which is mingled with it. Since truth is so near at hand, since we are not obliged to tumble over many authors, to hunt after every celebrated

brated genius, but may have it by enquiring after it in our own breasts, are we not inexcusable if we do not obtain it? Are we not unworthy of compassion if we suffer our understandings to be over-run with error? Indeed it seems most reasonable and most agreeable to the wisdom and equity of the divine operations, that every one should have a teacher in his own bosom, who will, if they seriously apply themselves to him, immediately enlighten them so far as is necessary, and direct them to such means as are sufficient for their instruction, both in human and divine truths: for, as to the latter, reason, if it be right and solid, will not pretend to be our sole instructor, but will send us to divine revelation when it may be had.

God does nothing in vain: He gives no power or faculty which he has not allotted to some proportionate use; and therefore if he has given to mankind a rational mind, every individual understanding ought to be employed in somewhat worthy of it. The meanest person should think as justly, tho' not as copiously as the greatest philosopher. And if the understanding be made for the contemplation of truth, (and I know not what else it can be made for) either there are many understandings who are never able to attain what they were designed and fitted for, which is contrary to the supposition that God made nothing in vain, or else the very meanest must be put in a way of attaining it. Now how can this be, if all that goes to the composition of a knowing man in the account of the world, be necessary to make one so? All have not leisure to learn languages, and pore on books, nor opportunity to converse with the learned: but all may think, may use their own faculties rightly, and consult the master who is within them.

By ideas we sometimes understand in general all that which is the immediate object of the mind, whatever it perceives; and in this large sense it may take in all thought, all that we are any ways capable of discerning: so when we say, we have no idea of a thing, it

is as much as to say we know nothing of the matter. Again, it is more strictly taken for that which represents to the mind some object distinct from it, whether clearly or confusedly: when this is its import, our knowledge is said to be as clear as our ideas are: for that idea which represents a thing so clearly, that by an attent and simple view we may discern its properties and modifications, at least so far as they can be known, is never false. All our certainty and evidence depend upon it; if we know not truly what is thus represented to our minds, we know nothing. Thus the idea of equality between two and two is so evident, that it is impossible to doubt of it; no argument could convince us of the contrary, nor be able to persuade us the same may be found between two and three.

And as such an idea as this is never false, so neither can any idea be said to be so, if by false we mean that which has no existence. Our idea certainly exists, though there be not any thing in nature correspondent to it: for though there be no such thing as a golden mountain, yet when I think of one, it is certain I have an idea of it.

Our ideas are then said to be false, or rather wrong, when they have no conformity to the real nature of the thing whose name they bear. So, that properly speaking, it is not the idea, but the judgment that is false. We err in supposing that our idea is answerable to something without us, when it is not. In simple perceptions we are not often deceived, but we frequently mistake in compounding them, by uniting several things which have no agreement, and separating others which are essentially united: indeed it may happen, that our perceptions are faulty sometimes, through the indisposition of the organs or faculties. Thus a man who has the jaundice, sees every thing tinged with yellow; yet even here the error is not in the simple idea, but in the compound one; for we do not mistake when we say the object appears yellow to our sight, though we
do,

do, when we affirm that it does, or ought to do so to others. So again, when the mind does not sufficiently attend to her ideas, nor examine them on all sides, it is very likely she will think amiss; but this also is a false judgment, that which is amiss in the perception being rather inadequateness than falsehood. Thus, in many cases, we enquire no farther than whether an action be not directly forbidden, and if we do not find it absolutely unlawful, we think that sufficient to authorize the practice of it, not considering it as we ought to do, clothed with the circumstances of scandal, temptation, &c. which place it in the same classes with things unlawful, at least make it so to us.

Rational creatures should endeavour to have right ideas of every thing that comes under their cognisance, but yet our ideas of morality, our thoughts about religion are those which we should with greatest speed and diligence rectify, because they are most important; the life to come, as well as the occurrences of this, depending on them. We should search for truth in our most abstracted speculations, but it concerns us nearly to follow her close in what relates to the conduct of our lives: For the main thing we are to drive at in all our studies, and that which is the greatest improvement of our understandings, is the art of prudence, the being all of a piece, managing all our words and actions as it becomes wise persons and good Christians.

Yet in this we are commonly most faulty; for besides the deceits of our passions, our ideas of particular virtues and vices, goods and evils, being an assemblage of divers simple perceptions, and including several judgments, are therefore liable to mistake, and much more so, considering how we commonly come by them. We hear the word that stands for such a thing, suppose honour: and then instead of enquiring what it is at the fountain-head; how defined in the oracles of God, what our own reason tells us of it, or what it is in the impartial judgment of the wisest and the best; custom
and

and the observations we make on the practice of such as pretend to honour, form our idea, which is seldom a right one, the opinions and practices of the world being very fallacious, and many times quite opposite to the dictates of truth and reason. For what a strange distorted idea of honour must they needs have, who can think it honourable to break a vow that ought to be kept, and dishonourable to get loose from an engagement that ought to be broken? who cannot bear to be taxed with a lie, and yet never think fit to keep their word? What do they think of greatness, who support their pomp at the expence of the groans and tears of many injured families? What is their idea of heaven, who profess to believe such a thing, and yet never endeavour to qualify themselves for the enjoyment of it? Have they any idea at all of these things when they speak of them? or if they have, is it not a very false one?

Now that we may avoid mistakes the better, and because we usually join words to our ideas, even when we only meditate, we should free them from all equivocation, not make use of any word which has not a distinct idea annexed to it; and where custom has joined many ideas to one word, carefully separate and distinguish them. For if our words be equivocal, how can we, by pronouncing such and such, excite the same idea in another that is in our own mind which is the end of speech; and consequently how can we be understood if sometimes we annex one idea to a word, and sometimes another? We may for ever wrangle with those, who perhaps would be found to agree with us if we understood each other, but we can neither convince them, nor clear up the matter to our own mind. For instance, should I dispute whether evil were to be chosen? without defining what I mean by evil, which is a word customarily applied to things of different natures, and should conclude in the affirmative; meaning at the same time the evil of pains, or any corporal loss or punishment;

ment; I were not mistaken; though another person who annexes no other idea but that of sin to the word evil, might justly contradict me, and say that I was. Or if in the process of my discourse, I should, without giving notice of it, substitute the idea of sin instead of that of pain, when I mention evil, I should argue falsely; for though it is a maxim that we may choose a less evil, to avoid a greater, if both of them be corporal evils, yet if only one of them be so, we should not choose it to avoid a sin, between which, and the evil of pain, there is no comparison: but if the two evils proposed to our choice be both of them sinful, that principle will not hold, we must choose neither, whatever comes of it, sin being eligible no manner of way.

Thus are our ideas often thought to be false, when the fault is really in our language; we make use of words without joining any, or only loose and indeterminate ideas to them, prating like parrots, who can modify sounds, pronounce syllables, and sometimes marshal them as a man would, though without the use of reason, or understanding any thing by them. Thus, after a long discourse, and many fine words, our hearer may justly ask us, what we have been saying? and what it is we would be at? And so a great part of the good breeding of the world, many elegant compliments pass for nothing; they have no meaning, or if they have, it is quite contrary to what the words in other cases signify.

From the comparison of two or more ideas clearly conceived, arises a judgment, which we may lay down for a principle, and as we have occasion, argue from it: always observing, that those judgments which we take for axioms and principles, be such as carry the highest evidence and conviction, such as every one who will but in the least attend, may clearly see, and be fully convinced of, and which need no other idea for their demonstration. Thus from the agreement which we plainly perceive between the ideas of God, and of goodness,
singly

singly considered, we discern, that they may be joined together, so as to form this proposition, "that God is good:" and from the evident disparity that is between God and injustice, we learn to affirm this other, "that he is not unjust." And so long as we judge of nothing but what we see clearly, we cannot be mistaken in our judgments, we may indeed in those reasonings and deductions we draw from them, if we are ignorant of the laws of argumentation, or negligent in the observation of them.

The first and principal thing, therefore, to be observed in all the operations of the mind is, that we determine nothing about those things of which we have not a clear idea, and as distinct as the nature of the subject will permit; for we cannot properly be said to know any thing which does not clearly and evidently appear to us. Whatever we see distinctly, we likewise see clearly, distinction always including clearness, though clearness does not necessarily include distinction, there being many objects clear to the view of the mind, which yet cannot be said to be distinct. We may have a clear, but not a distinct and perfect idea of God and our own souls; their existence and some of their properties and attributes may be certainly and indubitably known; but we cannot know the nature of our souls distinctly, and less that of God, because his is infinite. Now where our knowledge is distinct, we may boldly deny of a subject, all that which after a careful examination we find not in it: but where our knowledge is only clear, and not distinct, though we may safely affirm what we see; yet we cannot, without a hardy presumption, deny of it what we see not.

As judgments are formed by the comparing of ideas, so reasoning or discourse arises from the comparison or combination of several judgments. Nature teaches us, when we cannot find out what relation one idea bears to another by a simple view, or bare comparison to seek for a common measure, or third idea, which, relating

relating to the other two, we may, by comparing it with each of them, discern wherein they agree or differ. Our invention discovers itself in proposing readily apt ideas for this middle term ; our judgment in making choice of such as are clearest and most to our purpose, and the excellency of our reasoning consists in our skill and dexterity in applying them.

Invention indeed is the hardest part ; when proofs are found, it is not very difficult to manage them : and to know precisely wherein their nature consists, may help us somewhat in our enquiries after them. An intermediate idea then, which can make out an agreement between other ideas, must be equivalent to, and yet distinct from, those we compare by it. Where ideas agree, it will not be hard to find such an equivalent, and if, after diligent search, we cannot meet with any, it is a pretty sure sign that they do not agree. It is not indeed necessary that our middle idea be equivalent in all respects ; it is enough if it be in such as make the comparison : and when it is so to one of the compound ideas, but not to the other, that is a proof that they do not agree among themselves.

All the commerce and intercourse of the world is managed by equivalent conversation, as well as traffick. Why do we trust our friends, but because their truth and honesty appear to us equivalent to the confidence we repose in them ? Why do we perform good offices to others, but because there is a proportion between them and the merit of the person, or our own circumstances ? And as the way to know the worth of things, is to compare them with one another, so in like manner we come to the knowledge of the truth of them by an equal balancing.

But because examples are more familiar than precepts, as condescending to shew us the very manner of practising them, I shall endeavour to make the matter in hand as plain as I can, by subjoining instances to the following rules.

We have heard already that a medium is necessary, when we cannot discern the relation that is between two or more ideas, by intuition or simple view. Could this alone procure us what we seek after, the addition of other ideas would be needless; since to make a shew of wit, by tedious arguings and unnecessary flourishes, does only perplex and incumber the matter, intuition being the simplest, and on that account the best way of knowing.

Rule I. "Acquaint yourselves thoroughly with the state of the question; have a distinct notion of your object, whatever it be, and of the terms you make use of, knowing precisely what it is you drive at."

Rule II. "Cut off all needless ideas, and whatever has not a necessary connexion to the matter under consideration;" which serve only to fill the capacity of the mind, and to divide and distract the attention. From the neglect of this come those causeless digressions, tedious parentheses, and impertinent remarks, which we meet with in some authors: for, as when our sight is diffused and extended to many objects at once, we see none of them distinctly; so when the mind grasps at every idea that presents itself, or rambles after such as relate not to its present business, it loses its hold, and retains a very feeble apprehension of that which it should attend. Some have added another rule, "that we reason only on those things of which we have clear ideas." But that is a consequence of the first; for we can by no means understand our subject, or be well acquainted with the state of the question, unless we have a clear idea of all its terms.

Rule III. "Conduct your thoughts by order; beginning with the most simple and easy objects, and ascending, as by degrees, to the knowledge of the more composed." Order makes every thing easy, strong, and beautiful. That superstructure, whose foundation is not duly laid, is not like to last or please: nor are they likely

to solve the difficult, who have neglected or slightly pass over the easy questions.

Rule IV. "Leave no part of your subject unexamined;" It being as necessary to consider all that can let in light, as to shut out all that is foreign to it. We may stop short of truth, as well as over-run it; and though we look never so attentively on our proper object, if we read but half of it, we may be as much mistaken, as if we extended our sight beyond it. Some objects agree very well when observed on one side, which upon turning the other shew a great disparity. Thus the right angle of a triangle may be like to one part of a square, but compare the whole, and you will find them very different figures. A moral action may, in some circumstances, be not only fit but necessary, which in others, where time, place, and the like, have made an alteration, would be most improper; and if we venture to act on the former judgment, we may easily do amiss; if we would act as we ought, we must view its new face, and see with what aspect that looks on us.

To this rule belongs that of "dividing the subject of our meditations into as many parts as we can, and as shall be necessary to understand it perfectly." This indeed is most necessary in difficult questions, which will scarce be unravelled but in this manner by pieces; and let us take care to make exact reviews, and to sum up our evidence justly, before we pass sentence and fix our judgment.

Rule V. "Always keep your subject directly in your eye, and closely pursue it through all your progress;" there being no better sign of a good understanding, than thinking closely and pertinently, and reasoning dependently, so as to make the former part of our discourse support the latter; and this an illustration of that, carrying light and evidence in every step we take. The neglect of this rule is the cause, why our discoveries of truth are seldom exact, that so much is often said to little purpose, and many intelligent and industrious readers,
when

when they have read over a book, are very little wiser than when they began it. That the two last rules may be the better observed, it will be fit very often to look over our process, so far as we have gone, that so, by rendering our subject familiar, we may the sooner arrive to an exact knowledge of it.

Rule VI. "Judge no farther than you perceive, and take not any thing for truth, which you do not evidently know to be so." Indeed in some cases we are forced to content ourselves with probability, but it were well if we did so only, where it is plainly necessary; that is, when the subject of our meditation is such, as we cannot possibly have a certain knowledge of it, because we are not furnished with proofs, which have a constant and immutable connection with the ideas we apply them to; or because we cannot perceive it, which is our case in such exigencies, as oblige us to act presently on a cursory view of the arguments proposed to us, where we want time to trace them to the bottom, and to make use of such means as would discover truth.

I cannot think we are often driven to such straits in any considerable affair, though I believe that very many subjects may be proposed to us, concerning which we cannot readily pass our judgment, either because we never considered them before, or because we are wanting in some means that lead to the knowledge of them. In which case, reason wills that we suspend our judgment until we can be better informed; nor would it have us remit our search after certainty, even in those very cases, in which we may sometimes be forced to act only on probable grounds. For reason cannot rest satisfied with probabilities where evidence is possible; our passions and interests may, but that does not incline us to leave off enquiring, lest we happen to meet somewhat contrary to our desires. No: reason requires us to continue our enquiries with all the industry we can, until they have put us in possession of truth, and when we have found her, enjoins us to follow her, how opposite

soever she may cause our latter actions to be our former. But by this we may learn, and so we may by every thing, that such weak and fallible creatures as we are, be sure to think candidly of those whose opinions and actions differ from our own; because we do not know the necessity of their affairs, nor in what ill circumstances they are placed, in respect of truth.

The state of the question being distinctly known, and certain ideas fixed to the terms we make use of, we shall find sometimes, that the difference which was supposed to be between the things themselves, is only in the words, in the several ways we make use of to express the same idea.

If, upon looking into ourselves, we discern that these different terms have but one and the same idea, when we have corrected our expressions, the controversy is at an end, and we need inquire no farther. "Thus if we are asked, whether God is infinitely perfect?" there needs no intermediate idea, to compare the idea of God, with that of infinite perfection, since we may discern them, on the very first view, to be one and the same idea differently expressed; which to go about to explain or prove, were only to cumber it with needless words, and to make what is clear, obscure: for we injure a cause instead of defending it, by attempting an explanation or proof of things so clear, that as they do not need, so perhaps they are not capable of any. But if it be a question, "whether there is a God, or a being infinitely perfect?" We then are to examine the agreement between our idea of God, and that of existence. Now this may be discerned by intuition; for upon a view of our ideas, we find that existence is a perfection, and the foundation of all other perfections, since that which has no being, cannot be supposed to have any perfection. And though the idea of existence is not adequate to that of perfection, yet the idea of perfection includes that of existence, and if that idea were divided into parts, one part of it would exactly agree with this. If therefore
we

we will allow, that any being is infinite in all perfections, we cannot deny that that being exists: existence itself being one perfection, and such a one as all the rest are built upon.

If unreasonable men will farther demand, "why is it necessary that all perfections should be centered in one being? It is not enough that it be parcelled out among many? And though it be true, that that being which is all perfection, must needs exist, yet where is the necessity of an all-perfect being?" We must then look about for proofs and intermediate ideas, and the objection itself will furnish us with one. For those many whose particular ideas it would have joined together, to make a compound one of all perfection, are no other than creatures, as will appear if we consider our idea of particular being, and of creature; which are so far from having any thing to distinguish them, that in all points they resemble each other. Now this idea naturally suggests to us that of creation, or a power of giving being to that, which before the exerting of that power had none; which idea, if we use it as a medium, will serve to discover to us the necessity of an all-perfect being.

Whatever has any perfection or excellency, which is all we mean here by perfection, must either have it of itself, or derive it from some other being. Now creatures cannot have their perfection, because they have not their being, from themselves; for to suppose that they made themselves, is an absurdity too ridiculous to be seriously refuted; it is to suppose them to be, and not to be, at the same time, and that when they were nothing, they were able to do the greatest matter. Nor can they derive their being and perfection from any other creature: for though some particular beings may seem to be the cause of the perfection of others, as the watch-maker may be said to be the cause of the regular motions of the watch; yet trace it a little farther, and you will find this very cause shall need another, and so without end until you come to the fountain-head,

head, to that all-perfect Being, who is the last resort of our thoughts, and in whom they naturally and necessarily terminate. If to this it be objected, that we as good as affirm that this all-perfect Being is his own maker, by saying he is self-existent, and so we fall into the same absurdity which we imputed to that opinion which supposes that creatures were their own maker, the reply is easy: we do not say he made himself, we only affirm that his nature is such, that though we cannot sufficiently explain it, because we cannot comprehend it, yet thus much we can discern, that if he did not exist of himself, no other being could ever have existed. Thus either all must be swallowed up in an infinite nothing, if nothing can properly have that epithet; and we must suppose that neither we ourselves, nor any of those creatures about us, ever had, or ever can have a being; which is too ridiculous to imagine, or else we must needs have recourse to a self-existing being, who is the maker and lord of all things. And since self-existence must of necessity be placed somewhere, is it not much more natural and reasonable to place it in infinite perfection, than among poor frail creatures, whose origin we may trace, and whose end we see daily hastening?

Since there are innumerable beings in the world, which have each of them their several excellencies or perfections; since these can no more derive their perfections than their being from themselves, or from any other creature; since a self-existing being is the result of our thoughts, the first and only true cause, without which it is impossible that any thing should ever have existed; since creatures with their being receive all that depends on it, from him their maker; since none can give what he has not, and therefore he who communicates an innumerable variety of perfections to his creatures, even all that they enjoy, must needs entertain in himself all those beauties and perfections he is pleased to communicate to inferior beings. Nothing can be more plain and evident than that there is a God,
and

and that the existence of an all perfect being is absolutely necessary.

If some are better pleased with the usual way of syllogisms, and think an argument cannot be rightly managed without one, for their satisfaction we will add another instance.

Suppose the question were put, whether a rich man is happy? By a rich man, understanding one who possesses the wealth and good things of this world, and by happy, the enjoyment of the proper good of man; we compare the two terms riches and happiness together, to discern if they be so much one and the same, that what is affirmed of the one may be said of the other; but we find they are not. For if riches and happiness were terms convertible, then all who are happy must be rich, and all who are rich must be happy. To affirm the last of which, is to beg the question, and the contrary appears by the following argument, which makes use of satisfaction with one's own condition for the middle idea, or common measure.

He who is happy is satisfied with his condition, and free from anxious cares and solicitude; for these proceeding from the want of good, he who enjoys his proper good cannot be subject to them. But riches do not free us from anxieties and solicitude, they many times increase them: therefore to be rich and to be happy are not one and the same thing.

Again, If there are some who are happy, and yet not rich, then riches and happiness are two distinct things. But a good poor man is happy in the enjoyment of God, who is better to him than thousands of gold and silver; there riches and happiness are to be distinguished, and we cannot affirm a man is happy because he is rich, neither can we deny it. Riches, considered absolutely in themselves, neither make a man happy, nor hinder him from being so: they contribute to his happiness, or they obstruct it, according to the use he makes of them.

As for the common rules of disputation, they more frequently entangle than clear a question; nor is it worth while to know any more of them than may help to guard us from the sophistry of those that use them, and assist us in the managing of an argument fairly, so long as it is tenable, and until we are driven from it by the mere dint of truth. To be able to hold an argument right or wrong may pass with some, perhaps, for the character of a good disputant, but must by no means be allowed to be that of a rational person: it belongs to such to detect, as soon as may be, the fallacies of an ill one, and to establish truth with the clearest evidence. For indeed truth, not victory, is what we should contend for in all disputes, it being more glorious to be overcome by her, than to triumph under the banner of error. And therefore we pervert our reason, when we make it the instrument of an endless contention, by seeking after quirks and subtleties, abusing equivocal terms, and by practising the rest of those little arts every sophister is full of, which are of no service in the discovery of truth; all they can do is to ward off an opponent's blow, to make a noise, and raise a dust, that so we may escape in the hurry, our foil being undiscovered.

It were endless to reckon up all the fallacies we put on ourselves, and endeavour to obtrude on others. On ourselves in the first place; for however we may be pleased in the contemplation of our own craft, or (to use those softer names we are apt to give it) our acuteness and ingenuity; whoever attempts to impose on others, is first imposed on himself: he is cheated by some of those grand deceivers, the world, the flesh, and the devil, and made to believe that vain-glory, secular interest, ambition, or perhaps sensuality or revenge, or any the like contemptible appetites, are preferable to integrity and truth.

It is to little purpose to guard ourselves against the sophisms of the head, if we lie open to those of the heart. One irregular passion will put a greater obstacle between

us.

us and truth, than the brightest understanding and clearest reasoning can easily remove. This every one of us is apt to discern in others, but we are blind to it in ourselves. We can readily say that it is pride or obstinacy, interest or passion, or in a word, self-love, that keeps our neighbour from conviction, but all this while imagine our own hearts are very clear of them; though more impartial judges are of another mind.

I wish there were no reason to think, that there are some who attempt to maintain an opinion which they know to be false, or at least which they have cause to suspect: and therefore industriously avoid what would manifest their error. It is hoped however, that the greatest part of the disputers of the world are not of this number, and that the reason why they offer their neighbours sophistical arguments, is, because they were not aware that they are in the wrong, but are rather persuaded that they are acted only by a zeal for God, an honest constancy and stanch integrity; though at the very same time quite different motives move them under these appearances.

And indeed he must be an extraordinary good man, a wonder scarce produced in an age, who has no irregular passion stirring, who receives no manner of tincture from pride and vicious self-love, to which all are so prone, and which hide themselves under so many disguises. Who is got above the world, its terrors and allurements, has laid up his treasure in Heaven, and is fully contented with his present circumstances, let them be what they will, having made them the boundaries of his desires? Who knows how to live on a little very happily, and therefore receives no bias from his own conveniency, nor is led captive by his appetites and interests? Such a one is the happy man, who is well qualified to find out truth, and to make a right judgment in all things.

Some of all parties pretend to these qualifications; they would be thought to be disinterested and free from

passion, they will affirm that no humour or private end, nothing but an honest zeal for truth, gives warmth to their discourses; and yet it often happens, that before they conclude them, they give too much occasion to have it thought, that how large soever their knowledge in other things may be, they are not well acquainted with their own hearts. All which considered, how confidently soever we are persuaded of our own integrity, though we think we have penetrated to the very bottom of our hearts, it would not be amiss to suspect ourselves sometimes, and to fear a bias, even at the very instant we take care to avoid one.

For truth being but one, and the rational faculties not differing in kind but in degree, though there may be different measures of understanding, there could not be such contradictions in mens opinions as we find there are, even in those who examine, as well as in those who do not, were they acted only by the love of truth, and did not self-love persuade them that they shall find their own particular account by such an opposition. I would not be so understood, as if I thought that in all controversies one side must needs be criminal, if not by wilfully opposing truth, yet at least by an indulgence of such unmortified passions as estrange them from it. No, without doubt, great allowances are to be made on the score of education, capacity, of leisure and that opportunity of information we have had. But this we may venture to say, that had we but a modest opinion of ourselves, believing it as possible for us, as for those who contradict us, to be mistaken; did we behave ourselves answerable to such a belief; were we seriously convinced that nothing is so much our interest, as a readiness to admit of truth from whatever hand it comes, the greatest part of our disputes would have a better issue than we generally find. At least if we could not be so happy as to convince one another, our contests would be managed with more temper and moderation, would not conclude in such a breach of charity,

of at best in such a coldness for each other, as they usually do.

If we consider wisely, we shall find it to be our present interest, as well as our future, to do that in reality which all of us pretend to; that is, to search after and to follow truth; and to do it with all that candour and ingenuity which becomes a true philosopher, as well as a good Christian; making use of no arguments but what we really believe, and giving them up contentedly, when we meet with stronger. Our present interest is what weighs most with the generality, and what we usually make all other considerations give place to. For what is it we contend for? They who have so little souls as to bait at any thing beneath the highest end, make reputation their aim, and with it that authority and wealth which usually attend it. But now reputation cannot be acquired, at least not a lasting one, by fallacious reasonings. We may perhaps for a while get a name by them among unwary persons, but the world grows too quick-sighted to be long imposed on. If a love of truth do not, yet envy and emulation will set other heads at work to discover our ignorance or fraud. They are upon the same design, and will not suffer us to go away with the prize undeservedly. And besides, with how ill an aspect must he needs appear, who does not reason fairly, and by consequence how unlike is he to gain on those who hear him? There are but three causes to which false arguments can be referred, ignorance, rashness, or design; and the being suspected for any one of these, hinders us very much in acquiring that reputation, authority, or preferment we desire. I must confess, were we sure the fallacy would not be detected, and that we should not lie under the suspicion of it, we might gain our point; for provided the paint do not rub off, good colouring may serve a present turn as well as a true complexion. But there is little reason to hope for this, because of what was just now mentioned, and for other reasons that might be added.

Now what can be more provoking than the idea we have of a designing person ? of one who thinks his own intellectuals so strong, and ours so weak, that he can make us swallow any thing, and lead us where he pleases ? Such an one seems to have an intention to reduce us to the vilest slavery, the captivation of our understandings, which we justly reckon to be the highest insolence. And since every one puts in for a share of sense, and thinks he has no reason to complain of the distribution of it, whoever supposes that another has an over-weening opinion of his own, must needs think that he undervalues his neighbours understanding, and will certainly repay him in his own coin, and deny him those advantages he seems to arrogate.

The most we can say for ourselves, when the weakness of our arguments comes to be discovered, is, that we were mistaken through rashness or ignorance ; which, though more pardonable than the former, are no recommending qualities. If we argue falsely, and know not that we do so, we shall be more pitied than when we do, but either way disappointed. And if we have added rash censures of those who are not of our mind, as we cannot so handsomely retreat, so neither will so fair quarter be allowed us, as those who argue with meekness, modesty, and charity, may well expect. When we have cast up our account, and estimated the present advantage that false arguings bring us, I fear what we have got by a pretence to truth, will not be found to countervail the loss we shall sustain by the discovery that it was no more ; which may induce us, if other considerations will not, to be wary in receiving any proposition ourselves, and restrain us in being forward to impose our sentiments on others.

After all, it is a melancholy reflexion, that a great part of mankind stand in need of arguments drawn from so low a motive as worldly interest, to persuade them to that, to which they have much greater inducements. It is strange that we should need any other
confi-

considerations besides the bare performance of our duty, and those unspeakable advantages laid up for all such as do it sincerely hereafter; when we have the approbation of God, and the infinite rewards he had proposed to those who study to recommend themselves to him, for our encouragement. How low are we sunk, if the applause of men, and the little trifles which they can bestow, weigh any thing with us? I am therefore almost ashamed of having proposed so mean a consideration, but the degeneracy of the age required it: and they who perhaps at first follow the truth, as the Jews did once for the loaves only, may at last be attracted by its own native beauties.

As nature teaches us logick, so does it instruct us in rhetorick, much better than rules of art; which if they are good ones, are nothing else but those judicious observations that men of sense have drawn from nature, and that all who reflect on the operations of their own minds, will find out themselves. The common precepts of rhetorick may teach us how to reduce ingenious ways of speaking to a certain rule, but they do not teach us how to invent them. This is nature's work, and she does it best. There is as much difference between natural and artificial eloquence, as there is between paint, and true beauty. All that is useful in this art, is the avoiding certain evil ways of writing and speaking, and above all, an artificial and rhetorical stile, composed of false thoughts, hyperboles, and forced figures, which are the greatest faults in rhetorick.

I shall not therefore recommend, under the name of rhetorick, an art of speaking floridly on all subjects, and of dressing up error and impertinence in a quaint and taking garb, any more than I did that wrangling, which goes by the name of logick, and which teaches us to dispute for and against all propositions indefinitely, whether they are true or false. It is an abuse both of reason and address, to press them into the service of a trifle or an untruth, and a mistake to think that any argument can be rightly made, or any discourse truly eloquent,

eloquent, that does not illustrate and enforce truth. For the design of rhetorick is to remove those prejudices that lie in the way of truth, to reduce the passions to the government of reason, to place our subject in a right light, and excite our hearers to a due consideration of it. I know not what exactness of method, pure and proper language, figures, insinuating ways of address and the like signify, any farther than as they contribute to the service of truth, by rendering our discourse intelligible, agreeable, and convincing. They are indeed very serviceable to it, when they are duly managed; for good sense loses much of its efficacy by being ill expressed, and an ill stile is nothing else but the neglect of some of those, or overdoing others of them.

Obscurity is one of the greatest faults in writing, and does commonly proceed from a want of meditation; for when we pretend to teach others what we do not understand ourselves; no wonder we do it at a sorry rate. It is true, obscurity is sometimes designed, to conceal an erroneous opinion which an author dares not openly own, or which if it be discovered, he has a mind to evade. And sometimes even an honest and good writer, who studies to avoid it, may insensibly fall into it, by reason that his ideas being become familiar to himself by frequent meditation, a long train of them are readily excited in his mind, by a word or two which he is used to annex to them; but it is not so with his readers, who are perhaps strangers to his meditations, and yet ought to have the same idea raised in theirs that was in the author's mind, or else they cannot understand him. If, therefore, we desire to be intelligible to every body, our expressions must be more plain and explicit than they needed to be, if we writ only for ourselves, or for those to whom our frequent discourse has made our ideas familiar.

Not that it is necessary to express at length all the process our mind goes through in resolving a question. This would spin out our discourse to an unprofitable tediousness,

dioufness, the operations of the mind being much more speedy than those of the tongue or pen. But we should fold up our thoughts so closely and neatly, expressing them in such significant, though few words, as that the reader's mind may easily open and enlarge them. And if this can be done with facility, we are perspicuous as well as strong; if with difficulty or not at all, we are perplexed and obscure writers.

Scarce any thing conduces more to clearness, the great beauty of writing, than exactness of method, nor perhaps to persuasion; for by putting every thing in its proper place, with due order and connexion, the reader's mind is gently led where the writer would have it. Such a stile is easy without success; copious, as that signifies the omission of nothing necessary, yet not verbose and tedious, nor stuffed with nauseous repetitions, which they, who do not think before they write and dispose their matter duly, can scarce avoid. The method in thinking has been already shewn, and the same is to be observed in writing; which if it be what it ought, is nothing else but the communicating to others the result of our frequent and deep meditations, in such a manner as we judge most effectual to convince them of those truths which we believe: always remembering that the most natural order is ever best. That we must first prepare their minds by removing those prejudices and passions which are in our way, and then propose our reasons with all the clearness and force, with all the tenderness and good-nature we can.

And since the clearness and connexion, as well as the emphasis and beauty of a discourse, depend in a great measure on the right use of the particles, whoever would write well, ought to inform themselves nicely in their proprieties, an and, a the, a but, a for, &c. do very much perplex the sense when they are misplaced, and make the reader take it many times quite otherwise than the writer meant it.

I know not a more compendious way to good speaking and writing, than to choose out the most excellent in either, as a model on which to form ourselves : or rather, to imitate the perfections of all, and avoid their mistakes ; for few are so perfect as to be without fault, and few so bad as to have nothing good in them. A true judgment distinguishes, and neither rejects the good for the sake of the bad, nor admits the bad because of the good that is mingled with it. No sort of style but has its excellency, and is liable to defect. If care be not taken, the sublime, which subdues us with nobleness of thought and grandeur of expression, will fly out of sight ; and by being empty and bombast, become contemptible. The plain and simple will grow dull and abject ; the severe dry and rugged ; the florid vain and impertinent ; the strong, instead of rousing the mind, will distract and entangle it by being obscure ; even the easy and perspicuous, if it be too diffuse or over-delicate, tires us instead of pleasing. Good sense is the principal thing, without which, all our polishing is of little worth ; and yet if ornaments be wholly neglected, very few will regard us. Studied and artificial periods are not natural enough to please ; they shew too much solicitude about what does not deserve it, and a loose and careless style declares too much contempt of the public. Neither reason nor wit entertain us, if they are driven beyond a certain pitch ; and pleasure itself is offensive if it be not judiciously dispensed.

Every author almost has some beauty or blemish remarkable in his style, from whence it takes its name ; and every reader has a peculiar taste of books as well as meats. One would have the subject exhausted ; another is not pleased if somewhat be not left to enlarge on in his own meditations, this affects a grave, that a florid style ; one is for easiness, a second for plainness, a third for strength, a fourth for politeness ; and perhaps the great secret of writing, is the mixing all these in so just a proportion, that every one may taste what he likes without
being

being disgusted by its contrary; and may find at once, that by the solidity of the reason, the parity and propriety of the expression, and insinuating agreeableness of address, his understanding is enlightened, his affections subdued, and his will duly regulated.

This is indeed the true end of writing, and it would not be hard for every one to judge how well they had answered it, would they but lay aside self-love, so much of it at least, as makes them partial to their own productions. Did we consider our own with the same severity, or but indifferency, that we do another's writing, we might pass a due censure on it, might discern what thought was crude or ill-expressed, what reasoning weak, what passage superfluous, where we were flat and dull, where extravagant and vain, and by criticizing on ourselves, do a greater kindness to the world than we can in making our remarks on others. Nor should we be at a loss, if we were impartial, in finding our methods to inform, persuade and please; for human nature is for the most part much alike in all, and that which has a good effect on us will, generally speaking, have the same on others. To guess what success we are like to have, we need only suppose ourselves in the place of those we address to, and consider how such a discourse would operate on us, if we had their infirmities and thoughts about us.

In doing this, we shall find there is nothing more improper than pride and positiveness, nor any thing more prevalent than an innocent compliance with their weakness: such as pretend not to dictate to their ignorance, but only to explain and illustrate what they did or might have known before, if they had considered it and suppose that their minds be employed about some other things, was the reason why they did not discern it as well as we: for human nature is not willing to own its ignorance. Truth is so very attractive, there is such a natural agreement between our minds and it, that we care not to be thought so dull, as not to be able to find out by
ourselves

ourselves such obvious matters. We should therefore be careful, that nothing pass from us which upbraids our neighbours ignorance, but study to remove it, without appearing to take notice of it, and permit them to fancy, if they please, that we believe them as wise and good as we endeavour to make them. By this we gain their affections, which is the hardest part of our work, excite their industry, and infuse a new life into all generous tempers, who conclude there is great hopes, they may with a little pains attain what others think they know already, and are ashamed to fall short of the good opinion we have entertained of them.

And since many would yield to the clear light of truth, were it not for the shame of being overcome, we should convince, but not triumph, and rather conceal our conquest than publish it. We doubly oblige our neighbours, when we reduce them into the right way, and keep it from being taken notice of that they were once in the wrong: which is certainly a much greater satisfaction, than that blaze of glory which is quickly out, that noise of applause which will soon be over. For the gaining our neighbour, at least, the having honestly endeavoured it, and the leading our own vanity in triumph, are real goods, and such as we shall always have the comfort of. It is to be wished, that such propositions as are not attended with the clearest evidence, were delivered only by way of enquiry, since even the brightest truth, when dogmatically dictated, is apt to offend our reason, and make men imagine their liberty is imposed upon; so far is positiveness from bringing any body over to our sentiments. Besides, we are all of us liable to mistake, and few have humility enough to confess themselves deceived in what they have confidently asserted, but think they are obliged in honour to maintain an opinion they have once been zealous for, how desirous soever they may be to get rid of it, could they do it handsomely. Now a modest way of delivering our sentiments assists us in this, and leaves

us at liberty to take either side of the question, as reason and riper consideration shall determine.

In short, as thinking conformably to the nature of things is true knowledge, so the expressing our thoughts in such a way, as most readily, and with the greatest clearness and life, excites in others the very same idea that was in us, is the best eloquence. For if our idea be conformable to the nature of the thing it represents, and its relations duly stated, this is the most effectual way both to inform and persuade; since truth being always amiable, cannot fail of attracting, when she is placed in a right light, and those to whom we offer her are made able and willing to discern her beauties. If therefore we thoroughly understand our subject, and are zealously affected with it, we shall neither want suitable words to explain, nor persuasive methods to recommend it.

True Christians have really that love for others, which all who desire to persuade, must pretend to; they have that probity and prudence, that civility and modesty, which the masters of this art say a good orator must be endowed with, and have plucked up those vicious inclinations, from whence the most distasteful faults of writing proceed. For why do we chuse to be obscure, but because we intend to deceive, or would be thought to see much farther than our neighbour? One sort of vanity prompts us to be rugged and severe, and so possessed with the imagined worth and solidity of our discourse, that we think it beneath us to polish it: another disposes us to elaborate and affected ways of writing, to pompous and improper ornaments; and why are we tediously copious, but that we fancy every thought of ours is extraordinary? Contradiction is indeed for our advantage, as tending to make us wiser; yet our pride makes us impatient under it, because it seems to lessen that esteem and deference we desire should be paid us. Whence come those sharp reflexions, those imagined strains of wit, not to be endured among Christians, and which serve not to convince but to pro-
voke,

voke, now arrived to a more scandalous degree of rage and insolence than ever? Whence come they but from ill-nature and revenge, from a contempt of others, and a desire to set forth our own wit? Did we write less for ourselves, we should sooner gain our readers, who are many times disgusted at a well-writ discourse, if it carries a twang of ostentation: and were our temper as Christian as it ought to be, our zeal would be spent on the most weighty things, not on little differences of opinions.

I have made no distinction in what has been said between speaking and writing, because though they are talents which do not always meet, yet there is no material difference between them. They write best, perhaps, who do it with the gentle and easy air of conversation; and they talk best, who mingle solidity of thought with the agreeableness of a ready wit. As for pronunciation, though it takes more with some auditors many times than good sense; there needs little to be said, in a discourse which is not addressed to those that have business with the pulpit, the bar, or St. Stephen's Chapel; but to gentlemen and ladies, especially the latter, whom nature does for the most part furnish with such a musical tone, persuasive air, and winning address, as renders what they say sufficiently agreeable in private conversation. And as to spelling, which they are said to be defective in, if they do not believe, as they are usually told, that it is fit for them to be so, and that to write exactly is too pedantic, they may soon correct that fault, by pronouncing their words aright, and spelling them accordingly. I know this rule will not always hold, because of an imperfection in our language, which has been often complained of, but is not yet amended: however, a little observation in this case, or recourse to books, will assist us; and if at any time we happen to mistake, by spelling as we pronounce, the fault will be very venial, and custom rather to be blamed than we.

Nothing

Nothing has been said of grammar, though we cannot write properly if we transgress its rules, supposing the custom, and the reading of English books, are sufficient to teach us the grammar of our own tongue, if we but in any measure attend to them. And though the poets are generally accused of writing false English, If I may speak my own experience, their mistakes are not so common as are pretended, nor are they the only persons guilty. What they most commonly fail in, is the particles and connexion: and that generally through a briskness of temper, which makes them forget; or haste, which will suffer them to read over again what went before. And indeed, those who speak true grammar, unless they are very careless, cannot write false, since they need only peruse what they have writ, and consider whether they would express themselves thus in conversation.



P R I D E.

THE sobriety of the soul stands in a right governing its passions and affections, and to that there are many virtues required. Humility may well have the first place, not only in respect of excellency of the virtue, but also of its usefulness towards the obtaining of all the rest; this being the foundation on which all the others must be built: and who hopes to gain them without this, will prove to be the foolish builder “who built his house upon the sand.”

There are two sorts of humility: as, the having a low and mean opinion of ourselves, and the being content that others should have so of us. The former is contrary to pride, the latter to vain-glory; both are absolutely necessary to Christians as it is to avoid the contrary vices.

The

The sin of pride is so great, that it cast the angels out of heaven; and if we may judge of the sin by the punishment, it was not only the first but the greatest sin that ever the devil himself had been guilty of. We need no better proofs of its heinousness, than that it is so extremely hateful to God, that besides that instance of his punishing the Devil, we may frequently find in the Scriptures, "every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord." Again, "God resisteth the proud." Several other texts might be quoted to the same purpose, but it is needless, the tenor of the divine writ being so entirely against this vice, that none who ever read it, can be ignorant of the great hatred God bears to this sin of pride. Now since it is certain God, who is all goodness, hates nothing but as it is evil, it must needs follow, that where God hates in so great a degree, there must be a great degree of evil.

Pride is not more sinful than it is dangerous. How many other sins does it draw us into? As humility is the root of all virtue, so is this of all Vice. He that is proud sets himself up as his own God, and so can never submit himself to any other rules or laws than what he makes to himself. "The ungodly is so proud that he careth not for God." The royal Psalmist tells us, it is his pride that makes him despise God; and when a man is once come to that, he is prepared for the commission of all sins. I might instance in a multitude of particular sins which naturally flow from this of pride; as anger, which the wise man sets as the effect of pride, calling it proud wrath; strife and contention, which he again notes to be the offspring of pride, "only by pride cometh contention." And both these are indeed the most natural effects of pride. He who thinks very highly of himself, expects much submission and observance from others, and therefore cannot but rage and quarrel whenever he thinks it not sufficiently paid. It would be endless to mention all the bitter fruits of this bitter root. Pride not only betrays us to many sins, but also makes them incurable in

us, for it hinders the working of all remedies. Those remedies must either come from God or man: if from God, they must either be the way of meekness and gentleness, or else of sharpness and punishment. Now if God by his goodness essays to lead a proud man to repentance, he quite mistakes God's meaning, and thinks all the mercies he receives are but the reward of his own desert, and so long it is sure he will never think he needs repentance. But if on the other side God uses him more sharply, and lays afflictions and punishments upon him, those in a proud heart cause nothing but murmurings and hating of God, as if he did him injury in those punishments. As for remedies that can be used by man, they again must be either by way of correction or exhortation. Corrections from men will sure never work more on a proud heart than those from God; for he that can think God unjust in them, will much rather believe it of a man. And exhortations will do as little; for let a proud man be admonished, though never so mildly and lovingly, he looks on it as a disgrace, and therefore instead of confessing or amending the fault, he falls to reproaching his reprover, as an over-busy or censorious person, and for that greatest and most precious act of kindness, looks on him as his enemy. Now one that thus stubbornly resists all means of cure, must be concluded in a most degenerate state. The punishment that attends the sin of pride, will need little proof, when it is considered that God is the proud man's profest enemy, that he hates and resists him, there can then be little doubt that he who has so mighty an adversary shall be sure to smart for it. How severely is this sin threatened in Scripture? "Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall." Again, speaking of the proud, the wise man assures us, "though hand join in hand, yet they shall not be unpunished." The decree, it seems, is unalterable, and whatever endeavours are used to preserve the proud man, they are but vain, "for he shall not go unpunished." This is very remarkable in the story of Nebuchadnezzar, who,

who, though a king, the greatest in the world, yet for his pride was driven from among men to dwell and feed with beasts. And it is most frequently seen, that this sin meets with very extraordinary judgments even in this life. But if it should not, let not the proud man think he has escaped God's vengeance, for it is sure there will be a most sad reckoning in the next. If God spared not the proud angels, but cast them into hell, let no man hope to speed better.

The folly, as well as the sin of this vice, will appear if we consider the several things of which men are wont to be proud, as the goods of nature, the goods of fortune, or the goods of grace.

By the goods of nature are meant beauty, strength, wit, and the like, and the being proud of any of these is a great piece of folly. We are very apt to mistake, and think ourselves handsome or witty when we are not, and then there cannot be a more ridiculous folly than to be proud of what we have not, and such every one esteems it in another man, though he never supposes it his own case, and so never discerns it in himself. Wherefore there is nothing more despicable amongst all men, than a proud fool; yet every man, that entertains high opinions of his own wit, is in danger of being thus deceived; a man's own judgment of himself being of all others the least to be trusted. But suppose we be not out in judging, yet what is there in any of these natural endowments which is worth the being proud of, there being scarce any of them which some creature or other has not in a greater degree than man? How much does the whiteness of the lilly, and the redness of the rose, exceed the white and red of the fairest face? What a multitude of creatures is there that far surpass man in strength and swiftness? And several others there are which as far as concerns any useful ends of theirs, act much more wisely than most of us. They are therefore often proposed to us in scripture, by way of example, and it is then surely great unreasonableness for us to think highly of ourselves, for such things as are common to us
with

with beasts and plants. But if they were as excellent as we fancy them, yet they are not at all durable. They are impaired and lost by divers means: a frenzy will destroy the rarest wit, a sickness blast the freshest beauty, and reduce the greatest strength; or however old age will be sure to do all. Besides, these goods of nature, how admirable soever are not our acquisitions, but given or rather lent us by another, and therefore it is wonderous vanity to be proud of them. No man can think he did any thing towards the procuring his natural beauty or wit, and so will have no reason to value himself for them; "what hast thou, said St. Paul, which thou hast not received? wherefore then boasteth thou thyself?" The folly is as great to be proud of the goods of fortune, by which are meant, wealth, honour, and the like. For it is sure they add nothing of true worth to the man: somewhat of outward pomp and bravery they may help him to, but that makes no change in the person. You may load an ass with money, or deck him with rich trappings, yet still you will not make him a whit the nobler kind of beast by either of them. Besides, these are things we have no hold of, they vanish often before we are aware. He who is rich to-day may be poor to-morrow, and then will be the less pityed by all in his poverty, the prouder he was when he was rich. We have them all but as stewards, to lay out for our master's use, and therefore should rather think how to make up our accounts, than pride ourselves in our receipts. Whatever of these we have, they, as well as the former, are not owing to ourselves; but if they be lawfully gotten we owe them only to God, whose blessing it is that maketh rich; if unlawfully, we have them upon such terms that we have very little reason to brag of them.

By the goods of grace we mean any virtue a man has. These things must be owned to be very valuable, they being infinitely more precious than all the world, yet to be proud of them is, of all the rest, the highest folly, not
only

only in the foregoing respect that we help not ourselves to them, grace being above all things most immediately God's work in us; but especially in this, that the being proud of grace is the sure way to lose it. God, who gives grace to the humble, will take it from the proud. For if, as we see in the parable, the talent was taken from him who had only put it to no use at all, how shall we hope to have it continued to him that has put it to so ill uses, instead of trading with it for God, has trafficked with it for Satan? And as he will lose the grace for the future, so will he lose all the reward of it for the time past. For let a man have never so many good acts, yet, if he be proud of them, that pride shall be charged on him to his destruction, but the good shall never be remembered to his reward. This proves it to be a most wretched folly to be proud of grace: it is like that of children, that pull those things in pieces they are most fond of; but yet much worse than that of theirs, for we not only lose the thing, and that the most precious that can be imagined, but we must also be eternally punished for doing so; there being nothing that shall be so sadly reckoned for in the next world, as the abuse of grace; and certainly there can be no greater abuse of it, than to make it serve for an end so directly contrary to that for which it was given, it being given to make us humble, not proud; to magnify God, not ourselves.

The necessity of flying this sin must therefore be apparent to all good Christians, who are so seriously to consider what has been already said concerning it, as may work in them not some slight dislike, but a deep and irreconcilable hatred to the sin: to make them watchful over their own hearts, that they may not cherish any beginnings of it, nor suffer them to feed on the fancy of their own worth; but whenever any such thought arises, to beat it down immediately with the remembrance of some of their follies or sins, and so make this very motion of pride an occasion of humility. In order to this they must never compare themselves

selves with those they think more foolish or more wicked than they are, that they may not be like the pharisee, and extol themselves for being better. But if they will needs make comparisons, let them do it with the wise and godly, and then they will find they come so far short, as it may help to pull down their high esteem of themselves. Let them also be earnest in prayer, that God would root out all degrees of this sin in them, and make them one of those "poor in Spirit," to whom the blessing even of heaven itself is promised.

It is observed that God, who has made of one blood all nations of the earth, has so equally distributed all the most valuable privileges of human nature, as if he designed to preclude all insulting of one man over another. Neither has he only thus insinuated it by his providence, but has enforced it by his commands. We find in the levitical law what a peculiar care he takes to moderate the anger of judicial correction upon this very account, lest "thy brother be despised in thine eyes." So unreasonable did he think it, that the crime or misery of one should be the exaltation of another. Pride is never more apt to exert itself than by assuming a superiority over the guilty and unfortunate. St. Paul brands it as a great guilt of the Corinthians, that they, upon the occasion of the incestuous person, were "puffed up when they should have mourned." When we see a dead corps, we do not insult over it, or brag of our own health and vigour, but it rather damps us, and makes us reflect, that it may, we know not how soon, be our own condition. And certainly the spectacles of spiritual morality, should have the same operation. We have the same principle of corruption with our lapsed brethren, and have nothing but God's grace to secure us from the same effects, which by all insulting reflexions we forfeit, for he "gives grace only to the humble." St. Paul says, "if any man be overtaken in a fault, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness, considering himself left thou also be tempted." The falls of others ought to

excite our pity towards them, our caution to ourselves, and our thankfulness to God, if he has preserved us from the like : for, “ who made thee differ from another ? ” But if we spread our sails, and triumph over their wrecks, we expose ourselves to worse. Other sins, like rocks, may split us, yet the lading be saved : but pride like a gulph, swallows us up. Our very virtues, when so leavened, becoming weights and plumets, to sink us to the deeper ruin. The apostle’s counsel is therefore very pertinent to this matter, “ be not high-minded ; but fear.”

As in all these reflexions we have had particular regard to the weaker sex, so must we particularly in this article of pride. Not that we would not recommend to them, to encourage that generous spirit which disdains the false flattery of men, and is a good guard of their virtue and honour : but since they have, not without some reason, been charged with vanity and affectation, as frailties more peculiarly theirs than the other sexes, who are however far from being free from them, we must with more than ordinary earnestness give them caution against vanity, which for the most part is attended by affectation, insomuch that one can hardly tell how to divide them. I will not call them twins, because more properly, vanity is the mother, and affectation the darling daughter. Vanity is the sin, and affectation the punishment. The first may be called the root of self-love, the other the fruit. Vanity is never at its full growth until it spreads into affectation, and then it is compleat.

Not do well any longer upon the definition of them, we will pass to the means and motives to avoid them : in order to it, the sex are to consider, that the world challenges the right of esteem and applause ; and where any assume, by their single authority, to be their own carvers, it grows angry, and never fails to seek revenge. If we measure a fault by the greatness of the penalty, there are few of a higher size than vanity, as there is scarce a punishment which can be heavier than that of being laughd at.

Vanity

Vanity makes a woman, tainted with it, so top-full of herself, that she spills it upon the company; and because her own thoughts are entirely employed in self-contemplation, she endeavours, by an unhappy mistake, to confine her acquaintance to the same narrow circle of that which only concerns her ladyship, forgetting she is not of half that importance to the world, that she is to herself; so much out is she in her value, by being her own appraiser. She will fetch such a compass in discourse, to bring in her beloved self, and rather than fail, her fine petticoat, that there can hardly be a more comical scene, than such a trial of ridiculous ingenuity. It is a pleasure to see her angle for commendations; and rise so dissatisfied with the ill-bred company, if they will not bite: to observe her throwing her eyes about to fetch in prisoners. She cruises like a privateer, and is so out of countenance, if she returns without booty, that it is no ill piece of comedy. She is so eager to draw respect, that she always misses it; yet thinks it so much her due, that when she fails she grows waspish, not considering that it is impossible to commit a rape upon the will; that it must be fairly gained, and will not be taken by storm; and that in this case the tax ever rises highest by a benevolence. If the world, instead of admiring her imaginary excellencies, takes the liberty to laugh at them, she appeals from it to herself, for whom she gives sentence, and proclaims it to all companies. On the other side, if encouraged by a civil word, she is so obliging that she will give thanks for being laughed at, in good language. She takes a compliment for a demonstration, and sets it up as an evidence even against her looking-glass. But the good lady being all this while in a most profound ignorance, forgets that men would not let her talk upon them, and throw so many senseless words at their heads, if they did not intend to put her person to fine and ransom for her impertinence. Good words for any other lady are so many stones thrown at her: She can by no means bear them; they

make her so uneasy that she cannot keep her seat, but up she rises, and goes home half burst with anger and strait lacing. If by great chance she says any thing that has sense in it, she expects such an excessive rate of commendations, that, to her thinking, the company ever goes away in her debt. She looks upon rules as things made for the common people, and not for persons of her rank; and this opinion sometimes tempts her to extend her prerogative to the dispensing with the commandments. If by great fortune she happens in spite of her vanity to be honest, she is so troublesome with it, that as far as in her lies she makes a scurvy thing of it. Her bragging of her virtue looks as if it cost her so much pains to get the better of herself, that the inferences are very ridiculous: her good humour is generally applyed to the laughing at good sense. It would do one good to see how heartily she despises any thing that is fit for her to do. The greatest part of her fancy is laid out in choosing of her gown, as her discretion is chiefly employed in not paying for it. She is faithful to the fashion, to which not only her opinion but her senses are wholly resigned. So obsequious she is to it, that she would be reconciled even to virtue, with all its faults, if she had her dancing-master's word that it was practised at court.

To a woman so composed, when affectation comes in to improve her character, it is then raised to the highest perfection: she first sets up for a fine thing, and for that reason will distinguish herself, right or wrong, in every thing she does. She would have it thought that she is made of so much the finer clay, and so much more sifted than ordinary, that she has no common earth about her. To this end she must neither move nor speak like other women, because it would be vulgar, and therefore must have a language of her own, since ordinary English is too coarse for her. The looking-glass in the morning dictates to her all the motions of the day, which by how much the more studied, are so much the more mistaken.

She

She comes into a room as if her limbs were set on with ill-made screws, which makes the company fear the pretty thing should leave some of its artificial person upon the floor. She does not like herself as God Almighty made her, but will have some of her own workmanship, which is so far from making her a better thing than a woman, that it turns her into a worse creature than a monkey. She falls out with nature, against which she makes war without admitting a truce, those moments excepted in which her galant may reconcile her to it. When she has a mind to be soft and languishing, there is something so unnatural in that affected easiness, that her frowns could not be by many degrees so forbidding. When she would appear unreasonably humble, one may see she is so excessively proud that there is no enduring it: there is such an impertinent smile, such a satisfied simper, when she faintly disowns some fulsome commendation a man happens to bestow upon her against his conscience, that her thanks for it are more visible under such a disguise, than they could be if she should print them. If a handsomer woman takes any liberty of dressing out of the ordinary rules, the mistaken lady follows without distinguishing the unequal pattern, and makes herself uglier by an example misplaced, either forgetting the privilege of good looks in another, or presuming without sufficient reason upon her own. Her discourse is a senseless chime of empty words, a heap of compliments, so equally applyed to different persons, that they are neither valued nor believed. Her eyes keep pace with her tongue, and are therefore always in motion. One may discern that they generally incline to the compassionate side; and that notwithstanding her pretence to virtue, she is gentle to distressed lovers, and ladies that are merciful. She will repeat the tender part of a play so feelingly, that the company may guess without injustice she was not altogether a disinterested spectator. She thinks that paint and sin are concealed by railing at them.

Upon the whole, being divided between the two opposites of pride, her beauty and her virtue, she is often tempted to give broad hints that somebody is dying for her; and of the two she is less unwilling to let the world think she may be sometimes profaned, than that she is never worshipped.

Very great beauty may perhaps so dazzle for a time, that men may not so clearly see the deformity of these affectations; but when the brightness goes off, and the lover's eyes are by that means set at liberty to see things as they are, he will naturally return to his senses, and recover the mistake, into which the ladies' good looks had at first engaged him. When he is once undeceived, he ceases to worship that as a goddess which he sees only an artificial shrine, moved by wheels and springs to delude him. Such women please only like the first opening of a scene, that has nothing to recommend it but the being new. They may be compared to flies, that have pretty shining wings for two or three hot months, but the first cold weather makes an end of them; so the latter season of these fluttering creatures is dismal. From their nearest friends they receive a very faint respect, from the rest of the world the utmost degree of contempt.

This picture as gay as it is, is most likely to have an effect on the minds of those gay ladies that can make a jest of good counsel, but cannot bear to be made a jest of themselves, which vanity and affectation will certainly do. Their deformity well considered is instruction enough, for the same reason that the sight of a drunkard is a better sermon against that vice, than the best that was ever preached upon it.

After having said thus much against vanity, we must remind the ladies that we do not intend to apply the same censure to pride well placed and rightly defined. It is an ambiguous word; one kind of it is as much a virtue as the other is a vice. But we are naturally so apt to choose the worst that it is become dangerous to recommend the best side of it.

A woman is not to be proud of her fine gown, nor, when she has less wit than her neighbours, to comfort herself that she has more lace. Some ladies put so much weight upon ornaments, that if one could see into their hearts, it would be found that even the thoughts of death are made less heavy to them by the contemplation of their being laid out in state and honourably attended to the grave.

One may come a good deal short of such an extreme, and yet still be sufficiently impertinent, by setting a wrong value upon things which ought to be used with more indifference. A lady must not appear solicitous to engross respect to herself, but be content with a reasonable distribution, and allow it to others, that she may have it returned to her. She is not to be troublesomely nice, nor to distinguish herself by being too delicate, as if ordinary things were too coarse for her. This is an unmannerly and offensive pride, and where it is practised deserves to be mortified, of which it seldom fails. She is not to lean too much upon her quality, much less to despise those that are below it. Some make quality an idol, and then their reason must fall down and worship it. They would have the world think that no amends can ever be made for the want of a great title, or an ancient coat of arms. They imagine that, with these advantages, they stand upon the higher ground, which makes them look down upon merit and virtue as things inferior to them. This mistake is not only senseless but criminal too, in putting a greater price upon that which is a piece of good luck, than upon things which are valuable in themselves. Laughing is not enough for such a folly, it must be severely whipped, as it justly deserves. It will be confessed, there are frequent temptations given persons of rank to be angry, and by that to have their judgments corrupted in these cases. But they are to be resisted, and the utmost that is to be allowed, is, when those of a new edition will forget themselves, so as either to brag of their weak side, or

for 20 years.

Very good
the men in
affection
Zoe's ge-
things and
and more
looked bad-
served, we
the only
spring to
the village
round a
the, that is
the road
there, it
is called
water with
green of
The
water in
the ground
is, and
which is
the

1992

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

PHYSICS DEPARTMENT

RECEIVED
JAN 10 1964
FROM THE
LIBRARY OF THE
PHYSICS DEPARTMENT
UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
PHYSICS DEPARTMENT
LIBRARY
5734 S. UNIVERSITY AVE.
CHICAGO, ILL. 60637
U.S.A.
TEL. 373-5500
CABLE: CHICAGO 4
POSTAL: 24-7300

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
PHYSICS DEPARTMENT
LIBRARY
5734 S. UNIVERSITY AVE.
CHICAGO, ILL. 60637
U.S.A.
TEL. 373-5500
CABLE: CHICAGO 4
POSTAL: 24-7300

72

to endeavour to hide their meanness by their insolence, to cure them by a little reasonable rallery, a little sharpness well placed without dwelling long upon it.

These and many other kinds of pride are to be avoided.

That which is to be recommended to ladies, is an emulation to raise themselves to a character, by which they may be distinguished, an eagerness of precedence in virtue, and all such other things as may gain them a greater share of the good opinion of the world. Esteem to virtue is like cherishing air to plants and flowers, which makes them blow and prosper; and for that reason it may be allowed to be in some degree the cause, as well as the reward of it. That pride which leads to a good end cannot be a vice, since it is the beginning for a virtue; and to be pleased with just applause is so far from a fault, that it would be an ill symptom in a woman, who should not place the greatest part of her satisfaction in it. Humility is, no doubt, a great virtue, but it ceases to be so when it is afraid to scorn an ill thing. Against vice and folly it is becoming ladies to be haughty, but they must not carry the contempt of things to arrogance towards persons; and it must be done with fitting distinctions, else it may be inconvenient by being unseasonable. A pride that raises a little anger, to be outdone in any thing that is good, will have so good an effect that it is very hard to allow it to be a fault.

It is no easy matter to carry even between these two differing kinds of pride; but they should remember that it is safer for a woman to be thought too proud than too familiar.

The folly and wickedness of this vice having been thus explained, as well with respect to our conduct in civil life, as in a christian: it will appear not only so hainous, but so ridiculous, that were our concern for this world only, methinks enough has been said to make all reasonable people to detest it.



I N D E X.

A

- A** Bility to be considered in almsgiving, page 202.
Admiration false, that is raised by beauty, 86, 88.
Admonition a remedy against calumny, 264. The duty of it, 267.
Adulterers, their sin and punishment, 102. How several nations dealt with them, 105.
Adultery, whether worse in the man or woman, 105, 106.
Affections guide more than judgment, 281.
Alms, the manner of giving them well, 186. To be proportioned to the wants of the poor, 209. Not to be reserved to our last will, *ibid.*
Angry men a pain to themselves, 160.
Anger, its mischief and deformity, 164, 165.
Ant, the wonderful formation of it, 144.
Ancients, their simplicity in dress, 52.
Animals, in what on a level with man, 334.
Apparel, mens not to be worn by women, 44. Should be suited to every one's condition, 45. Gold and costly may be worn, 57, 58. The pride of it, not in the cost, 59. Loose and immodest, sinful, 63. Mistakes in censuring of it rectified, 73.
Applause, the vanity of an eager pursuit of, 268.
Arbitrament, an useful branch of charity, 196.
Arguing, rules for it, 311.
Arguments false, three causes of them, 321.
Aristides banished his country out of pure envy to his virtues, 240.

I N D E X.

- Authority divine, not so readily believed as human, 289.
- Authors, their errors through vanity, 330.
- Arithmetick should be taught to ladies, 12.

B.

- Backbiting, the common topic of discourse, 251.
- Bashful, a modish name for a coward, 113.
- Beauty, a blessing only when accompanied with virtue, 48. Not worth the Time and pains bestowed upon it, 86.
- Beggars, directions for giving alms to them, 205.
- Bigotry, a child of hell, 153, 175.
- Boarding-school education usefess and pernicious, 19.
- Books, directions for the choice of them, 299
- Burgundy, heiress of, her modesty, 45.
- Busy-bodies dangerous company, 24. Always impudent, 136. Scandalous 246. Never to be countenanced, 260.

C.

- Cæsar, what he says of the fear of death, 128.
- Calumny, how it triumphs, 193. Spreaders of it as bad as the inventors, 232. Supported by malice and interest, 233. The baseness of it, 258. An infallible rule against it, 264.
- Caution to be observed in speaking of others, 261. In delivering propositions, 328.
- Censure, the ladies most exposed to it, 132. How to be regulated by charity, 193. The great fault of doing unjustly, 245. We should never be the first in it, 267. When lawful, 271.
- Certainty, moral, what it is, 286.
- Chance, the impotence of it, 143.
- Charity, the excellence of that virtue, 81. Is Christ's new commandment, 170, 174. A remedy against Envy.

I N D E X.

- envy and pride, 172. Censoriousness, 173. Malice and revenge, 174. The want of it a forfeiture of God's pardon, 180. Chearfulness a necessary quality of it, 187. How to be exercised, 181, & seq. Should be rather a provision than a relief, 212.
- Chastity the most powerful of all christian virtues, 99. Helps to it, 109, 110. An instance of it in a Nicomedian prince, 110.
- Christian life influenced by common life, 152. Its qualities, 329.
- Christianity the best natured institution, 275.
- Churches, the ladies dress for them, 44.
- Clamour successful, in women, and why, 162.
- Clearness, the cause of it in thinking, 352. What most conduces to it, 325.
- Clemency, the abuse of it, 84.
- Cloisters, the virginity of them not praise-worthy, 100.
- Company, good against lewdness, 111.
- Compassion bred by charity, 171.
- Contemplation, what requisite to it, 298.
- Contradiction, men delight in it, 295.
- Conversation gay and merry, the danger of it, 9.
- Costly apparel, when criminal, 68.
- Curiosity, too much of it criminal, 135. How it should be employed, 137, & seq. Vicious when it enquires into the works of the creation with a spirit of scepticism, 145. Begot by envy and idleness, 147. A cause of scandal, 263.
- Custom not to be our guide in giving Alms, 202. The mischiefs of it, 278.

D

- Dancing, the use and abuse of it, 41.
- David's wickedness after his adultery, 103.
- Decency makes conversation useful, 84.
- Debates, religious, with what animosity carried on, 235.

Debtors,

I N D E X.

- Debtors**, the uncharitableness of using them ill, 190.
Directions for their giving alms, 207.
Defamation, those that are guilty of it fear it most, 233. Pride a great cause of it, 239. Most scandalous in men otherwise virtuous, 254.
Delicacy necessary in the use of wit, 37.
Designing persons hateful, 322.
Detraction never carried to such an extravagance, as now, 227. A flat contradiction to charity, *ibid.* Various kinds of it, 230, & seq. Blameable when true, 236. Envy a great promoter of it, 239. The poor gains that is made of it, 265.
Discourse, how spoiled by affectation, 341.
Discretion, what is implied in it, 82. The advantages of it, 84. It consists in timing things, 85. How to be observed in acts of charity, 210.
Disputation, the common rules perplexing, 318.
Distinction to be observed between the good and bad, 132.
Divinity, sophisticians of it seduce women, 155.
Doctor and Plowman, in what the difference between them consists, 290.
Dress, the design of it, 43. Errors in it, 44, & seq. Regulated by wise states, 46. Affectation in it misses its end, 51. Rules for it out of scripture, 53. Rich clothes not forbidden, *ibid.* Neatness commendable 63. Criminal if it tempts, though without design, 65. Time not to be wasted about it, 67. The power of it, 70.
Drinking, the beastliness of it in women, 121. and the danger, 122.
Dryden, verses of his against women, 2.
Duellists in a state of damnation, 177.
Dunners, how scandalous to the great, 47.

E.

- Earth**, the swiftness of its motion, 143.
Easiness of temper as bad as inflexibility, 155.

Edu;

I N D E X.

- Education, the mischief of its prejudices in religion,
154. How Women may be improved by it, 276.
Eloquence, the best, in what it consists, 329.
Employment necessary for the great, 9. A duty in all, 19.
Emulation in virtue recommended, 344.
Enemies to be beloved, 174, 197.
Envy its own punishment, 222. The basest of all crimes,
223. No body will own it, 222.
Equivalent, conversation so, as well as commerce, 310.
Estates, ladies should be acquainted with their hus-
bands, 13.
Estraterie, of vicious women, not to be corrected by
Lectures, 124.
Examples, the force of them, 244.
Experiments, upon others fame, dangerous, 234.
Expostulations on the duty of charity, 220, 221.
Eye and hand to be kept chaste, 107.

F.

- Faith, its objects as rationally proved as those of sci-
ence, 287. Has a mixture of the will, 288.
Fall of others ought to excite our pity, 338.
Fame, public, the measure of good and evil, 151.
How dear it should be to every one, 228. How the
great have courted it, 228.
Family, not to be neglected for the poor, 189.
Fancy, not to be indulged in uncleanness, 107. The
tyrant of lust, 128. Of women, how ill employed,
340.
Fashions, the cause of vanity in dress, 47. Followed
in worship, 82.
Fasts, how abused, 24.
Faults of others are sometimes to be published, 237.
But not lightly, 243.
Filthy discourse criminal, 108.
Flattery dangerous to women, 122.
Foppery avoided not for the sin but the folly of it, 45, 52.
Foppish

I N D E X.

- Peppish airs impudent in women, 126.
 Fortune no plea for idleness, 8. Good of things not
 to be proud of, 335.
 French authors, how they abuse the women, 3.
 French ladies, the great freedom they take, 120.
 Friends, their advice of great advantage, 293.
 Friendship with the wicked scandalous among the Pagans,
 132.
 Erugality, decent, a virtue, 95. A duty for the sake
 of charity, 212.

G.

- Galant authors, the danger of reading them, 27.
 Gaming, how far allowable in women, 40. How it
 provokes anger, 169. The gains to be given to the
 poor, 205.
 Genius to be consulted, 290.
 God, the necessity of his being proved, 314, & seq.
 Goodness makes all other perfections excellent, 224.
 Government for the good of the people, 136.
 Grammar, ladies should learn it, 11. May do it in
 English books, 331.
 Gratitude and love to God, expressions of them, 218,
 219.
 Grudging spoils charity, 187.

H.

- Hannibal, his saying of Marcellus's perverseness, 261.
 Hatred not so base as Envy, 222.
 Haughtiness in almsgiving condemned, 215.
 Heaven a scene of content, 166.
 Herbert, Mr. his saying of talkativeness, 116.
 History should be read by ladies, 13, 14.
 Honour, mistaken notions of it, 10. The mischief
 they have done, 228.
 Housekeepers, poor, the best objects of charity, 203.
 Humi-

I N D E X.

- Humility**, the distinguishing character of good ministers, 150. The most excellent cure for anger, 167. Two sorts of it, 331.
- Humour** must never be our guide, 80.
- Husband**, second, when not to be married, 151.
- Husbands** not to be engaged by dress, 64.
- Hypocrisy** in scandal, 273.

I.

- Ideas**, what is understood by them, 304. How we are deceived in them, 306. How to govern them, 307.
- Idleness**, the sin of it, 5. All the Christian virtues against it, 7.
- Jealousy**, the torments of it, 127.
- Jesus Christ**, his life, a glorious recommendation of charity, 217.
- Jewels**, to wear them not sinful, 55.
- Jews**, the proportion of their charity to their estates, 213.
- Impiety** increased by defamation, 244.
- Ignorance**, the mother of vice, 277.
- Impudence** in women, the great vice and deformity of it, 121, 123.
- Indiscretion** as destructive to reputation as guilt, 134.
- Industry** of vicious people to corrupt others, 279.
- Infidelity** and uncleanness go together 129.
- Informers**, in what an odious character, 271.
- Injuries** to reputation the worst of any, 229.
- Inquisitiveness** in other mens affairs condemned, 169.
- Interest**, worldly, the great argument, 322.
- Invention**, what is its office, 310.
- Judging ill of our neighbour**, the fault of it, 247, & seq.
- Judgment of the great day** not to be anticipated, 262.
- Judgment**, what it is deceived by, 299. Arises from comparison of ideas, 308.
- Justice**, when it may cease to be respected, 82. How it has relation to charity, 194.

Know,

INDEX.

K.

Knowledge defined, 285.

L.

Labour, a command and punishment, 33. A remedy against lust, 109.

Ladies, instructions for their reading and studies, 12.

Lady, a great one drew her husband's writings, 12.

Language often in fault when we think ideas are, 309.

Languages a necessary accomplishment for ladies, 15.

Languishing air sinful, 126.

Laughing, heed to be taken in it. 266. An attendant to vanity, 340.

Law, how far ladies should acquaint themselves with it, 12.

Levelling principles, how far every one is subject to them, 225.

Libellers, how they sin against charity, 173.

Liberality, a necessary qualification of charity, 190.

Liberty, the love of it rewarded with fame, 228.

Library, ladies, the design of it, 1, 4.

Lightness of carriage criminal, 124.

Litigators condemned, 136.

Litigiousness, how blameable in ministers, 197.

Looking-glass the womens guide, 340.

Love, lawful, must not be used immoderately, 100.

Lucifer's envy lost him heaven, 225.

Ludicrous terms, the only way of reproof, 114.

Lust, the filthiness of it, 101.

Lycurgus his saying about levelling, 255.

Lyes, our modern libellers great dealers in them, 231.

Lying spirit gone out among us, 273.

M.

Magnificence in acts of charity condemned. 187, 200.
Man,

I N D E X.

- Man, how wonderfully he is made, 137, 138. An enemy to God by his works, 175. What a dependent he is on God, 218.
- Man-haters, 240.
- Manlaughter too soft a name and punishment for murder, 177.
- Marriage hallowed by Christ into a mystery, 103. The abuse of it, 113.
- Mason the preacher, women seduced by him, 155.
- Meditation burdensome to nature, 298.
- Meekness a woman's best ornament, 75, 153, & seq.
- Men as well as women faulty in revealing secrets, 119.
- Mercy without alms a duty, 199. What are the works of it, *ibid.*
- Merry humours will be gratified at any expence, 236.
- Microscopes, what wonderful things to be viewed with them, 145.
- Mien, gravity enjoined in it by scripture, 151.
- Milton, verses of his against women, 2.
- Mind to be adorned before the body, 74. Its greatness consists in wishing the happiness of others, 223.
- Miserable not to be insulted, 337.
- Mistress of a family should be frugal, 96.
- Mode in dress not to be avoided but moderated, 59, & seq.
- Moderation; the great virtue of it, 181.
- Modesty, the great grace and virtue of it, 115. It wins more than beauty, 127. A branch of sobriety, 135.
- Monkish foundations no acts of charity, 200.
- Moon, its extent and distance from the earth, 139, & seq.
- Moral philosophy, ladies should be taught it, 15.
- Mortifications corporal, too much insisted on by the Papists and others, 110.
- Murder, the great sin of it, 177. Not punished severely enough, *ibid.*
- Music, the danger and use of it, 16; & seq.

Naked-

INDEX.

N.

- Nakedness not to be exposed or pryed into, 152.
- Nature, human, delights in charity, 208. Unwilling to own its ignorance, 327.
- Naylor the Quaker, his blasphemies, 155.
- Nebuchadnezzar punished for his pride, 333.
- Neighbour, the extensiveness of our love to him, 171.
The duty of our concern for his soul, 182. and for his body, 184. and estate, 185. and reputation, 193.
- St. James's royal law, 195.
- Niceness unnecessary, a Fault, 30.
- Noisy nonsense of men not to be suffered by women, 277.
- Novelty expected even in lessons of religion, 78.

O.

- Obedience of wives made a jest of, 93. Thought a great hardship, *ibid.*
- Obscurity affected, and why, 324.
- Offenders open, to be reprov'd, 248.
- Operas, the danger of frequenting them, 17.
- Opinion governs the world, 250.
- Orway, verses of his against women, 2, 3.

P.

- Paint in women, the folly and sin of it, 63.
- Parley must be avoided by women, 127.
- Partiality, every man's to himself, 245, 250.
- Particles ill-used perplex discourse, 325.
- Passion inflamed by words, 167. Predominant in all, 319.
- Peace-making, the duty of it, 196.
- Peevishness affected by women, 91.
- Pity to the poor, the duty of it, 206. To our neighbours faults, 259.

Phocion,

I N D E X.

- Phocion, his advice against hastiness, 168.
 Play-house discipline, what a help to impudence, 120.
 Poetry, how far ladies should be indulged in the study of, 17.
 Poor not to be insulted when relieved, 214.
 Poverty sins against chastity as well as riches, 109.
 Praise, mens aversion to it, 272.
 Prayer, for those that labour, 34. For the rich, 35.
 Against vanity, 95. For purity of mind, 96. A
 remedy against lust, 112. Against anger, 169.
 Charity one of its wings, 206.
 Preachers, their railing uncharitable a damnable sin,
 175.
 Pride, the greatness of the sin, 332. Its punishment,
 333. Folly, 334. The necessity of flying it,
 336. When a virtue, 344. Hard to carry it even
 between the two kinds of it, *ibid*.
 Principles of women vitiated by men, 129.
 Prodigality a companion of idleness, 23.
 Pronunciation, where it takes more than good sense,
 330.
 Proportions of charity considered, 213, 214.
 Prostitutes, their slavery and wretchedness, 127.
 Prudence, a qualification more necessary than wit, 37.
 As requisite as innocence, to preserve the ladies
 characters for virtue, 134. The use of it in cha-
 rity, 190. The great improvement of our under-
 standing, 306.
 Puritans, their law against adulterers, 105.

Q.

- Quakers, their mistake in dress, 53. Their error
 about womens preaching, 117. Expect reverence
 tho' they will not pay it, 150.
 Qualities of the mind got, like habits of the body, by
 use, 76.
 Quality, the crime of making an idol of it, 341.
 Quarrels

I N D E X

Quarrels arising from detraction, the terrible effects of them, 230, 275.

Queen Mary, her divine character for charity to men's souls, 183.

Quiet spirit; the praises of it, 90.

R

Railing, the offence of it, 272, & seq. A common vice; *ibid.*

Reason, human, very shallow, 292. Cannot be crossed; 293. Refers to revelation, 304. What it requires of us, 313.

Reasoning defined; 303. The use of it, 304. Rules for it, 311. & seq.

Recreations, the use and danger of them, 38, 41.

Reformation of manners, the piety of that design, 183.

Religion, none without virtue, 79. Tainted by scandal, 235.

Reports defamatory, reflections on them, 290. How they spread, 245.

Reproach; the fear of it the cause of sin, 253.

Reproof, when lawful, 271.

Revelation to be preferred to reason, 284.

Revenge, a most wicked and mischievous passion, 177.

Reverence due to ministers, 150. When they forfeit it, *ibid.*

Revilers, half witted-people, 253.

Rhetorick, taught us by nature, 323. The design of it, 324.

Riches, no sin to lay them up, 56.

Robbers may give alms, 201.

Roman ladies not allowed to talk in public, 116.

Rule, the best, of reason and religion, 80.

S

Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, too much exposed to adulterers and whoremongers, 106.

Saturn,

I N D E X.

- Saturn, planet, its bigness and distance from the earth,**
141.
- Satire, more effectual than instruction towards a reformation,** 114.
- Scandal, the damnable sin of it,** 173.
- Scandalous chronicle among the great,** 118.
- Science, what it is,** 288.
- Seat, a fine one described,** 139, & seq.
- Secrets revealed by women,** 119, 256. **Of state not to be officiously pryed into,** 135.
- Self-love, inconsistent with charity,** 198. **The root and fruit of it,** 338.
- Servants how they should spend their time,** 32.
- Senses, their light fallacious,** 287.
- Shamfacedness, the beauty of it in women,** 115.
- Shew, women misled by it,** 279.
- Silence in churches, enjoined women by the gospel,** 117. **An excellent remedy against censure,** 269.
- Sin, the spitefulness of it,** 133. **Should create shame,** 149. **The most fertile womb of it,** 253. **How occasioned by pride,** 332.
- Singularity, the pride of it,** 59.
- Slander the great vice of it,** 118. **It grows in all soils,** 235. **A weed of the quickest growth,** 243.
- Sobriety of the soul in what it consists,** 331.
- Society with the wanton to be avoided,** 132.
- Socrates, what he said of his own knowledge,** 117.
- Solomon, his description of discretion,** 84. **His distinguishing character of a foolish woman,** 164.
- Sophisms of the heart and head,** 318.
- Sots, their Company to be avoided,** 24.
- Souls of women neglected for their bodies,** 130.
- Spelling, faults in it easily corrected,** 330.
- Spirit, in what the greatness of it consists,** 160. **The happiness of a contented one,** 178.
- Stars, their magnitude and distance from the earth,** 142, & seq.
- State-juglers, afraid of being observed,** 136.
- Statue,**

I N D E X.

Statue, a fine one, preferable to a fine foolish woman,
76.
Stile, every author has something remarkable in it, 326.
Strength, every one should consult his own, 292.
Subjection of women, its expediency, 159.
Sun, its bigness and distance from the earth, 140, & seq.
Superiors, the respect due to them, 148.
Swearing in women, the shame and sin of it, 121.
Syllogism, 318.

T.

Talebearer not to be suffered, 169.
Talkativeness, the great weakness of it, 36, 116, 117.
A cause of defamation, 242.
Tattling, supported by scandal, 118, 241. Scandalous, 247.
Teachers of novelty, apt to seduce women, 155.
Temper, women should have a great guard upon it, 92. The value of a malleable one, 159.
Temptation, by dress criminal, 98. Not to be argued with, 108, 109.
Terms, mistakes in them the cause of debate, 315.
Termagant spirit, sinful, 94.
Time, to be improved and accounted for, 22. Misemployed by great men, 25. How spent by vain ladies, 27. Directions for them, 29, 30.
Tongue, the leprosy of it apt to spread, 255. Men loth to be cured of it, 264.
Tradesmen, the folly and sin of their being idle, 10, 11.
Treasures in heaven, laid up by charity on earth, 186. & seq. 221.
Trencher guests, great detractors, 241.
Triflers to be avoided, 24.
Trinity, reflections on the mystery of it, 284.
Truth, prejudices of all kinds taken up upon it, 250.
Truth, of our neighbour not to be said at all times, 259. The object of our understanding, 283. Its followers

I N D E X.

followers despised, 294. It makes a contraction of thought, 296. Why we should be in love with it, 301. Offends the great, 302. It is but one, 320. Our present interests to search after it, 321. Tyrants and their ministers, why they despise fame, 228.

V.

Vain men most pleased with scandal, 239.
 Vanity of dress, 62. Love sometimes kindled by vanity, 125. It spoils the duty of almsgiving, 205. May help to cure envy, 226. Of authors, 338. How it exposes women, 339.
 Variety gives beauty to the intellectual as well as material world, 290.
 Vicious persons, when no objects of charity, 203, 211. Always in alarm, 257.
 Virginity, a great help to a religious life, 100, 101. forced virginity not meritorious, *ibid*.
 Virtue, at first more easily kept by women than lost, 123.
 Virtues lose their power for want of conduct, 83. We should not be proud of them, 335.
 Visits, unnecessary ones, sinful, 27.
 Uncleaness, the parent of all sins, 104.
 Understanding, the meekness of it explained, 154. The extent of it, 282. Sufficiently illuminated, 285. Must not be complained of, 295. How to examine it, 296. To improve it, 301.
 Universe made for man, the least thing God has done for him, 145.
 Voice, regulated by modesty, 115.
 Volatileness of thought, very pernicious, 297.

W.

Wantonness in women spoils beauty and wit, 132.
 Wicked people would have their relations virtuous, 86.
 Wilful people never pitied, 197.

Will,

I N D E X.

- Will, meekness of it, explained, 157. Whence its irregularities proceed, 299.
- Wit, the character of it affected by both sexes, 36. When most misapplied, 267.
- Wisdom, preferable to beauty in marriage, 50.
- Wives may take more liberty in dress than virgins, 64. But not to the prejudice of their husbands, 71, 72. What will render them amiable to them, 88.
- Women, a great injustice to have books of knowledge kept from them, 1. Verses against them, 2, 3. How abused by French Authors, 3, 4. Inclined to be idle, 11. Should not be talkative, 115. They rival one another in dress, 131. Most exposed to censure, 132. Seduced by ill preachers, 154, & seq. The coolness of their constitution, 162. Apt to delight in scandal, 256. Curiosity their worst character, 265. In what unjustly called the weaker sex, 276. Take up religion as a mode, 280.
- World, visible, the miracles of it, 138, & seq.
- Worship, public, indecencies of ladies in it, 82. The reverence that should be observed in it, *ibid.*
- Writing, the true end of it, 327. Little difference between that and speaking, 330.

X.

Xantippe, a plague to her husband Socrates, 163.

Z.

- Zeal promotes scandal, 252. Apt to out-run knowledge, 281.
- Zeno, his definition of Modesty, 114. What he said to a talkative youth, 117,

The End of the First Volume.



